

**ARTHUR RANSOME: DISPATCHES
FROM RUSSIA, 1917-1924.**

VOLUME III.

1919-1921.

J.M.GALLANAR, EDITOR

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924.

ARTHUR RANSOME

Perhaps better known for his Swallows And Amazon books written in the 1930's and 1940's, Arthur Ransome was a literary critic and a political journalist in his early years. Arriving in Russia in 1913, he became by 1915 a correspondent for the [London] Daily News and Leader initially reporting on Russia's role in World War I. He soon became absorbed in the Russian political scene and eventually the Russian Revolution and what followed. He reported to the Daily News and Observer and subsequently the Manchester Guardian and briefly the New York Times. In addition his reports appeared in the New York Herald and the Baltimore Sun. His dispatches also appeared in the [London] Star, the sister newspaper for the Daily News. His knowledge of Russian gave him direct access to the Bolshevik leadership. He remained in Russia except for brief trips to England. During much of the central part of this period he also spent much time in the border state as he followed the revolution and the movements for independence which flowed from the Bolshevik Revolution across Russia's borders. Ransome was the only Western journalist to follow these events through this entire period and is therefore a major resource for our knowledge of these events.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924.

DEDICATION.

TO:

THE MEMORY OF MALCOLM C. GALLANAR.

1958-2015.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924.

COPYRIGHT. JOSEPH M. GALLANAR

ISBN---978-1-365-56870-1

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924.

**I WISH TO THANK THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATION
FOR ALL THEY HAVE HELPED ME ON THIS PROJECT.**

THE ARTHUR RANSOME TRUST.

GARAIT LEWIS.

CHRISTINA HARDYMENT.

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS especially

MARGRET KIECKHEFER

THE BRITISH LIBRARY.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.

THE MANACHESTER GUARDIAN.

COPYRIGHTS USE HAS BEEN GRANTED FROM:

THE ARTHUR RANSOME TRUST.

THE BRITISH LIBRARY.

**Ransome's journalistic reporting has been drawn from the following
newspapers:**

[London] Daily News.

[London] Observer.

Manchester Guardian.

New York Times [US]

**His articles sporadically appeared for very brief periods in the following
newspapers.**

New York Herald

Baltimore Sun

[London] Star.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924.

The Star was the evening sister newspaper of the Daily News and carried the same articles. The American Papers used his articles from the Daily News.

One very important acknowledgement. Without Wayne Hammond's very excellent bibliography entitled ARTHUR RANSOME, A BIBLIOGRAPHY a work of this kind could not have been done.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

VOLUME I 1917 and Introductions.

VOLUME II 1918.

VOLUME III 1919-1921.

VOLUME IV 1922-1924.

TEXT NOTES.

The TEXT was reproduced from computer disks which in turn were reproduced from microfilm.

1. Newspaper Initials used.

DN. Daily News.

O. Observer.

MG. Manchester Guardian.

NYT. New York Times.

2. In a very few cases Hammond's page reference is incorrect. This has been noted.

3 .In some cases the dispatch or parts of it or individual words were blurred and unreadable as a result of the photograph process when copying the original from the microfilm process. This has been noted either as unreadable (larger sections) or as ??? (word).

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924.

TWO INTRODUCTIONS. Introductions I is a dispatch to the Manchester Guardian written by Ransome in 1927 after he returned to Russia following his assignments in Egypt and China. It reviews the developments in Russia over the ten years since the Bolshevik Revolution as seen by Ransome. Introduction II is a much more detailed background account of the events that Ransome discussed. It is for the reader who has only a general knowledge of this period. (See vol. I)

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

VOLUME III

DISPATCHES FOR 1919-1921.

DN January 11, 1919.

**Bolsheviks Power Growing.
Widening of the Soviet Platform.
No Intervention.
Socialist Firm Against Reaction.**

Stockholm, Thursday.

Soviet Russia, like other revolutionary countries before it, is being hurriedly militarized to meet attacks from without. The Allies landing at Archangel and the rumors of intervention at other places have enabled the Bolsheviks – who were never Pacifist for peace sake – to get together an Army and to pull the country into a surprising concentration of effort. Hardly a branch of national work is now untouched by a sense of the necessities of war.

Realization of the monarchist character of the anti– Soviet forces, both in the Cossack country and in Siberia, has caused certain political changes within Soviet Russia. Both the Menshevik and the Right Social Revolutionaries Central Party Committee have passed resolutions marking a material change of outlook.

Against Intervention.

The Mensheviks now stand definitely on the Soviet platform, making reservations only in regard to the Soviet policy on the provisioning

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

question. A decree has accordingly been passed readmitting them to the Soviets. The Social Revolutionaries are less explicit, but have disclaimed the main reason for their exclusion by declaring against further Allied intervention, which they say "has lost its original purpose." At the same time they have not decided definitely to go over to the Soviet, but demand double energy in the struggle against reaction and Left tendencies.

More important than these changes of front by parties which, as the new elections prove, have lost all popular support, is the changed attitude of the cooperative societies. These old – established organizations are extremely influential, and have retained their vitality throughout the revolution. Hitherto they have been so conservative as almost to represent the opposition in the country. Last year the cooperatives were against the October Revolution. At conferences since then, while acquiescing in the Soviets, they have insisted on preserving complete independence and "political neutrality." In December the All – Russian Conference of Cooperated Societies at Moscow declared neutrality impossible at this moment of the struggle against reaction. They threw the principle of independence to the ground and agreed to put the whole of their experience at the service of the Soviets in the work of establishing labor communes. Their educational work is to be coordinated with that of the Soviets.

Finally the conference summoned all cooperatives "to do their utmost efforts in the struggle with the counter – revolution inside Russia and Anglo – American capitalism without", and declared that the cooperating movement "will fight with every means at its power against the invasion of Russian territory by Imperialist."

Swing of Opinion.

This means a considerable swing of opinion in the villages. The change in the political complexion of the villages is also indicated by the fact the poverty committees, which were originally started to counteract the influence of the rich peasants in the village Soviets, are now beginning to amalgamate with these Soviets. Lenin, speaking at a conference of

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

delegates from these land and property committees, referred to this as proof that the Russian Revolution was not "like the ordinary bourgeois revolutions in Western countries." He said that the poverty committees have brought about an enormous change in the late summer and autumn. His program is a gradual change from individual enterprise to the public cultivation of land. He hopes by the establishment of agricultural communes to set an example of more efficient methods than those hitherto employed by the Russian peasant, and in this way to increase actual productivity.

Starvation In Towns.

Meanwhile the conditions of life in the towns are about as near starvation as can be owing to the fact that Russia is unable to obtain manufactured goods to exchange for food, and is cut off from the raw materials which would enable her to manufacture at home. The peasants are naturally unwilling to give food for paper when they have no prospect of exchanging that paper for clothes, tools etc. This worthlessness of paper perhaps contributes to explain the successful collection of taxes, which according to a report given by M Krestinsky, Commissary of Finance is coming in with far less difficulty than was expected, and will bring between seven and 10 milliards, in spite of the skepticism, even among the Bolsheviks, when it was first proposed.

Soviet Russia is now in the position Republican France was in when it had to advance or starve. The heavy defeat of the Bolshevik Army at Perm, on the Eastern front, which Trotsky a short time ago reported is safe, is the more serious for them because it lessens their chances of getting raw materials from the mining districts of the Northern Urals. I expect, therefore, to see a tremendous effort made to recover Perm.

Other Fronts.

On the South front the position is more or less stationary. The Royalist adventure in the Ukraine has been liquidated and Petlura's troops are holding practically the whole country. The Soviet temporarily, at least, is safe from attack from the Ukraine. Petlura's Government is a

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Directorate – practically the rump of the old Ukranian Rada and is consequently anti-Soviet. But has owed much of the success over the Monarchist to the collaboration of the Ukrainian Soviets supporters. Petlura could not, without great risk, attempt to lead troops against Russia, and though he prohibited Bolshevik newspapers these were freely published in the principle Ukrainian towns.

In West Russia the Soviets are rapidly recovering ground lost by the Brest Peace. The Minsk Town Council passed a resolution rejoicing at the new unity between White and Great Russia. There is also abundant evidence that in Estonia and Livonia the Soviet movement is gaining ground, hundreds of recruits joining the Red Guards as they advance. Hence the appeals for foreign help.

A Free Postage.

In Russia the latest step in Socialization is a decree that postcards and letters not exceeding 15 grammes shall be carried free. Over 15 grammes the postage will be at ordinary rates for the whole weight. Also class distinctions have been abolished on the railways, and henceforth there will be one class instead of four, though persons traveling long distances or on night journeys may pay extra to secure a numbered place.

DN. April 24, 1919.

Russia After The Revolution. Life In Moscow.

[The following is the first of a series of articles descriptive of the present internal condition of Russia, written by Mr. Arthur Ransome, who, together with one Swedish and two Norwegian journalist recently made an expedition from Stockholm to Moscow. They left the latter city on March 14 after a stay of six weeks. Mr. Ransome's intimate acquaintance with Russia before and after the Revolution, coupled with

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the detached and independent judgment he has throughout brought to bear in Russian affairs, lends peculiar value to the analysis of the present situation by one who, as Lord Northcliff said in a dispatch published in the "Philadelphia Public Ledger" on January 23, should have been sent with an Allied Commission into Russia to find out what is really going on there.]

On the third day after my arrival in Moscow I saw a man driving a sledge laden with, I think, horse – flesh, mostly bones, probably dead sledge horses. As he drove a black cloud of crows followed the sledge and perched on it, tearing greedily at the meat. He beat at them continually with his whip, but they were so famished that they took no notice whatever. The crows often forced their way through the small ventilators of the windows in my hotel to pick up any scraps they could find inside. The pigeons, which formally crowded the streets, utterly undismayed by the traffic, confident in the security given by their supposed connection with religion, have completely disappeared. I do not believe there is anyone in Moscow who gets enough to eat, although the card system ensures that everybody shall get something. The children suffer least. Every child who goes to school gets a free meal there. The lowest estimate I heard put the number of children thus fed at 150,000 daily, and during the intense cold, when, owing to lack of fuel, the schools could not be properly heated and lessons were impossible, the children attended school for the meals alone. 10,000 pairs of felt boots were given to children who needed them. Milk is rationed, and until the children have been supplied it cannot be obtained by grown – up people.

Dinner Cards.

I lived in a hotel which, since it was mainly used by members of the Executive Committee, one would have expected to be particularly favored. On paying for my room at the beginning of the week I was given a card with the days of the week printed along its edge. This card gave me the right to buy one dinner daily, and when I bought it that day of the week was snipped off the card so that I could not buy another. The meal consisted of a plate of very good soup, together with the second course

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of a scrap of meat or fish. The price of the meal varied between five and seven roubles.

One could obtain this meal anytime between two and seven. Living hungrily through the morning, at 2 o'clock, I used to experience definite relief in the knowledge that now at any moment I could have my meal. Feeling in this way less hungry I used them to postpone it hour by hour, and actually dined about five or six o'clock. Thinking that I might indeed have been specially favored I made investigations, and found that the dinners supplied at the public feeding houses (the equivalent of our national kitchens) were of precisely the same size and character, any difference between the meals depending not on the food but on the cook.

A kind of rough and ready cooperative system also obtains. One day there was a notice on the stairs that those who wanted could get one pot of jam apiece by applying to the provisioning committee of the hotel. I got a pot of jam in this way, and on a later occasion, a small quantity of Ukrainian sausage.

The Food Speculator.

Besides the food obtainable on cards it is possible to buy, at ruinous prices, food from speculators, and an idea of the difference in the prices may be obtained from the following examples: Bread is one rouble 20 kopeks per pound by card and 15 to 20 rouble per pound from the speculators. Sugar is 12 rouble per pound by card and never less than 50 roubles per pound in the open market. It is obvious that abolition of the card system would mean that the rich would have enough and the poor nothing. Various methods have been tried in the effort to get rid of speculators, whose high profits naturally decrease the willingness of the villages to sell bread at less abnormal rates. But as a Communist said to me, "There is only one way to get rid of speculation, and that is to supply enough on the card system. When people can buy all they want at one rouble 20 they are not going to pay an extra 14 roubles for the encouragement of speculators." "And when will you be able to do that?" I asked. "As soon as the war ends and we can use our transport for peaceful purposes."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Rationed Clothes and Lodging.

When I reached Moscow in the first days of February I was shocked to find that so many of the shops were closed, but before I left, halfway through March, they were gradually reopening as national concerns. The stoppage and closure was due to a sort of stock – taking, the object of which was to prevent speculation in the small supplies of manufactured goods that remain. Like the national kitchens, there are now national boot stores, clothing stores, and so on. Anyone who wants a new pair of boots or a suit of clothes has to prove that those he has are worn out. He goes in his rags to his House Committee, who are supposed to satisfy themselves that he is not cheating, whereupon he is given a card authorizing him to make the purchase. This measure is extremely necessary, because, since there are not enough clothes and boots to meet the demand, unless purchase were thus restricted speculators would be buying half a dozen overcoats to sell at extravagant prices, again giving the rich an advantage over the poor.

Rooms are also distributed on much the same plan. Housing is considered a State monopoly, and a general census of housing accommodation has been taken. In every district there are housing committees to whom people wanting rooms apply. They work on the rough and ready that until every man has one room no one has a right to two. An Englishman acting as a manager of works near Moscow told me that part of his house had been allocated to workers in his factory, who, however, were living with him amicably, and had, I think, allowed him to choose which rooms he should concede. This plan, of course, proved very hard on house owners, and in some cases the new tenants have made a horrible mess of the houses, as might, indeed, have been expected, seeing that they had previously been of those who had suffered directly from the de-civilizing influences of overcrowding.

The Lack of Fuel

There is a shortage of houses; there is also a shortage of fuel, the main thing which, in a climate like the Russian, makes houses habitable. The

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

inadequate transport is fully occupied in throwing the Red Army from one threatened front to another: it cannot carry fuel as well. I should say that there was hardly a house in Moscow which has been properly heated through the winter. Thousands of pipes have burst, and with the thaw many people expect a myriad domestic floods. They are unable to obtain many of the materials essential for adequate plumbing.

Everyone in Moscow has suffered from the cold, the State Departments like the poorer districts. I found the Keeper of the Archives sitting at work in an old sheepskin coat and high felt boots, rising now and then to beat vitality into his hands, like a London cabman in the old days. The science professors at the Universities have frost – bitten fingers from touching the icy metal of their instruments during demonstrations. The president of the chief engineering committee, which controls all the constructive works of the Republic, showed me his right hand, hideous and useless, with stiff fingers like the roots of a vegetable. Many of his assistants have fallen ill, and the day before two of them had been carried home in something like a fit, the result of prolonged sedentary work in unheated rooms. He told me that a trainload of wood actually on the way to them two months before had had to be emptied at the side of the road and the wagons thrown north again with troops to meet a sudden pressure.

Improved Conditions

There have, on the one hand, been certain quite definite improvements. The national bakeries now produce bread, instead of those horrid cakes of straw and mud which made me, like many others ill in Moscow last year. The quantity of bread supplied on the cards is still small; I got 1 pound for every two days, but the quality is as good as could possibly be desired. I noticed also some improvement in the sledge horses, which, when I left Moscow about six months ago, were scarcely able to drag themselves along. I inquired the reason of the improvement, and a sledge – driver told me that the horses are rationed like human beings, and that there is once more a certain amount of oats. The prices of sledge – drives have risen to an almost incredible degree. A year ago Colonel Robins and I vowed we would never pay more than 10 rouble for

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the journey from Nikolai Station to the center of the town. Now, after hard bargaining, I was able to persuade a sledge – driver to take me for 50. I twice drove to the Rutyрка Prison from the center of the town; on one occasion it cost 150 rouble and on the second 200.

Apart from these abnormalities, hunger, and cold, life in the town has settled down and people no longer ask each other, Is the revolution going to last one week or two? The revolution is over, but the upheaval of altering the present regime, if in the end, that regime is altered by force, will be an upheaval far bloodier, far more violent, then anything that has yet been in Russia. But it is not expected.

Nothing seemed to me more characteristic of the new state of affairs than the fact that the shell – holes and bullet splashes that remained all last summer disfiguring the walls of the Hotel Metropole, symbols of a revolution in being, are now mended. There is scaffolding round the one damaged gate of the Kremlin, which is also being repaired. The streets are perfectly quiet and crowded in the evenings by men and women going home from the theater, apparently having quite forgotten that only a year ago they considered Moscow unsafe after dark. During the six weeks that I was there, though frequently visiting friends and returning from meetings of one kind or another late at night, I did not hear a single shot. This quiet does not mean that the people are content either to be hungry or to be cold. With the character of the discontent and the politics that may be based upon it I shall deal in a second article.

DN. April 26, 1919.

The Forces In Russia. Intervention And The Revolution

[We publish below the second of Mr. Ransome's articles on the present condition of Russia – the outcome of a six week visit to Moscow on which he left on March 14]

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

No man likes being hungry. No man likes being cold. There is, consequently, very general discontent in Moscow and Petrograd. The Communist, as the party in power, bear the blame. They themselves grumbled furiously at the state of affairs, and are more violent critics of their own mistakes than any of the other three parties. Of course, there are more than three, but for practical purposes they can be considered as three main groups, and, however dull you may find party politics, it is impossible for anyone who does not take the trouble to consider carefully the attitude of the Left Social Revolutionaries, the Right Social Revolutionaries, and the Mensheviks to get any idea of the prospects immediately before us in Russia.

Hunger and cold are a good enough basis of agitation for anyone desirous of overturning any existing Government. On the left, the Social Revolutionaries, led by the hysterical but flamingly honest Spiridonova, are alone in having no scruples or hesitation in this matter, the more responsible parties fearing the anarchy that would result from any violent change.

Opposed to Agreement.

But the Left Social Revolutionaries want something so much like anarchy that they have nothing to fear in a collapse of the present system. They are for a partisan Army, not a regular Army. They are against the employment of officers who served under the old regime. They are against the employment of responsible technicians and commercial experts in the factories. They believe that officers and experts alike, being bourgeois must be enemies of the people, insidiously engineering reaction. They are opposed to any agreement with the Allies, exactly as they were opposed to any agreement with the Germans. Not wanting an army, they would welcome occupation in order that they, with bees in their bonnets and bombs in their hands, might go about revolting.

The Communist arrested Spiridonova on February 11 on the ground that her agitation was dangerous and anarchist in tendency, starting discontent without a program for its satisfaction. Having a great respect

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

for her honesty, they were hard put to it to know what to do with her, and she was finally sentenced to be sent for a year to a home for neurasthenics, where she will be able to write and recover her normality. That they were right in their fears has been proved since by the troubles in Petrograd, where the workmen in some of the factories struck and passed Left Social Revolutionary resolutions, which so far from showing that they were awaiting reaction and General Judenitch, showed simply that they were discontented and prepared to move to the left.

The Mensheviks.

The second main group of opposition is dominated by the Mensheviks. Their chief leaders are Maetov and Dan. They would like the reintroduction of capitalists, of course much chastened by experience and properly controlled by themselves. Unlike Spiridonova's romantic friends, they approved of Chicherin's offer of peace and concessions to the Allies. They wrote that in making it the "Bolshevik Government was acting in the interest of the Russian nation as a whole." They have, furthermore, issued an appeal asking that the Allies shall come to an agreement with "Lenin's Government." As may be gathered from their choice of a name for the Soviet Government they are extremely hostile to it, but they fear worse things, and are consequently a little shy of exploiting, as they could, the dislike of the people for hunger and cold. They fear that agitation on these lines might well result in anarchy, which would leave the revolution temporarily defenseless against Koltchak, Denikin, and Judenitch, or any other armed reactionary. There non-Bolshevik enemies criticize the Mensheviks as follows: "They have no constructive program: they would like a bourgeois Government back again, in order that they might be in opposition to it on the left."

For a Constituent Assembly.

The position of the Right Social Revolutionaries is a good deal more complicated than that of the Mensheviks. In their later declarations they are as far from there romantic anarchist left wing as they are from there romantic reactionary extreme right. They stand, as they have always

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

stood, for a Constituent Assembly, but they have thrown over the idea of instituting a Constituent Assembly by force. They have come into closer contact with the Allies than any other party to the left of the reactionary Cadets. By associating themselves with the Czech forces on the Volga and minor revolts of a reactionary character inside Soviet Russia, they have pretty badly compromised themselves. Their change of attitude towards the Soviet Government must not be attributed to any change in their own program, but to the realization that the forces which they imagine were supporting them were actually being used to support something a great deal further right. The "Printers Gazette," a non-Bolshevik organ, printed one of their resolutions, one point of which demands the overthrow of the reactionary Governments supported by the Allies or the Germans, and another condemns every attempt to overthrow the Soviet Government by force of arms on the ground that such an attempt would weaken the working classes as a whole, and would be used by the reactionary groups for their own purposes.

While I was in Moscow I talked with the leaders of the opposition parties and think it worthwhile to record a little of what they said. Volsky, Right Social Revolutionary, President of the Conference of Members of the Constituent Assembly, from whose hands the directorate in Siberia received the authority which was snatched from the hands by Admiral Koltchak, whose original title was Commander of the Forces of the Constituent Assembly, gave a clear picture of what had happened to bring him and his associates from the side of the Allies to the side of the Soviet. The Constituent Assembly members were to have met on January 1 of this year, when the Directorate was to have resigned its powers into their hands. Koltchak's coup d'état blew this proposition to the winds Volsky said to me: "We were convinced by many facts that the policy of the Allied representatives in Siberia was directed not to strengthening the Constituent Assembly against the Bolsheviks and the Germans but simply to strengthening the reactionary forces behind our backs. Their attitude towards Koltchak's coup d'état made this apparent to the world, and thereby decided our position."

He criticized the Bolsheviks for being better makers of programs than organizers. They did not sufficiently base their policy on the study of

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

actual possibilities. "But that they are really fighting against a bourgeois directorship is clear to us. We are, therefore, prepared to help them in every possible way." He said, further: "Intervention of any kind will prolong the regime of the Bolsheviks by compelling us to drop opposition to the Soviet Government, although we do not like it, and do support it because it is defending the revolution."

The Lesson of the Ukraine.

With regard to the help given to individual groups or governments fighting against Soviet Russia, Volsky said they saw no difference between such intervention and intervention in the sense of sending troops. He doubts whether any bourgeois reactions can win permanently against the Soviet because it can have nothing to offer, no idea for which people will fight. If by any chance Koltchak, Denikin and Company were to win they would have to kill in tens of thousands where the Bolsheviks have had to kill in hundreds, and the result would be complete ruin and the collapse of Russia in anarchy. "Has not the Ukraine been enough to teach the Allies that even six months occupation of non— Bolshevik territory by half a million troops has merely the effect of turning the people into Bolsheviks!"

Martov, whom I saw at the office of his newspaper, which had just been suppressed on account of an article, which he admitted was a little indiscreet, objecting to the upkeep of the Red Army, said that he and his party were against every form of intervention for the following reasons: 1. Hostilities, the need of an army and active defense were bound to emphasize the least desirable qualities of the revolution, whereas an agreement, by lessening the tension, would certainly lead to moderation of Bolshevik policy. 2. The needs of the Army overwhelmed every effort of restoring the economic life of the country. He was convinced that intervention of any kind favored reaction, even supposing that the Allies did not wish this. "They cannot help themselves," he said, "the forces that would support intervention must be dominated by those of reaction, since all of the non— reactionary parties are prepared to sink their differences with the Bolsheviks in order to defend the revolution as a whole." He read me a letter from a peasant illustrating the unreadiness

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of the peasantry to go into communes (which as a compulsory business has already been discarded by the Central Government), and argued that life itself, the needs of the country, and the will of the peasant classes would lead to the changes he thinks desirable in the Soviet regime.

A "Democratic Republic."

Sukhanov, Gorky's friend, believes that Russia is not so far developed that a Socialist State is at present possible. He therefore wants a State in which private capital exists, and believes that the peasantry, with their instincts of small property holders, will eventually enforce something of the kind, and that the end will be some form of democratic Republic. He said that of course he was prepared to support the Bolsheviks against Allied intervention, but that at the same time he thought that if the Bolsheviks came further to meet the other parties, Mensheviks, etc., " Koltchak and Denikin would commit suicide and your Lloyd George would give up all thought of intervention." I asked him, What if they should be told to hold a Constituent Assembly or submit to a continuance of the blockade ? He said, "Such a Constituent Assembly would be impossible, and we should be against it." Sukhanov also opposed the idea of concessions on the ground that they meant the handing over of a lot of political power in the districts affected. He was against concessions on principle, and regretted that the Mensheviks were in favor of them.

DN. May 6, 1919.

Exhausted Russia.

Economic Strangulation as the Result of the New War.

4500 Locomotives To Do The Work Of 17,000.

The economic position of Russia is about as bad as it can be, though it will be even worse should the civil war continue. How bad it is may almost be guessed from my first article, in which I described the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

starvation in Moscow. The lack of food is not only a proof of Russian economic difficulties, but also one of the reasons of them. Half – starved workmen cannot, however willing, work as they would do under normal conditions, and only an enormous increase in Russian town industry will put the workman in front of as big a loaf as that which the peasant makes for himself. Putting aside conflicting statistics as to the productivity of labor under the new and old regime, it is impossible not to recognize that the master – key to Russian economic disaster is to be found in the break – down of her transport.

This affects the position in many ways. Although food, already in possession of the Government and destined for the starving populations of Moscow and Petrograd, is waiting at the country stations, it cannot for lack of transport be brought to the towns. There is more in it than that. Fuel for the factories, raw material for the machines, cannot be moved from place of origin. Factories work until they have run out of raw material or fuel, and then stop. The result is that the towns cannot supply the country's demands for manufactured goods. And what does this mean? The peasant, paid for his bread in roubles, finds those roubles valueless except as curiosities of rapidly decreasing rarity, because there is nothing he can buy with them.

The Army First.

The desperate struggle on the part of the town workers to make by some means or other the goods in exchange for which alone they can get bread from the country is handicapped by the inexorable demands of the war. If all else goes bare the Army that is defending the revolution must be properly clothed and equipped, and a large proportion of such fuel and raw material as reach the factories go thence, not to be exchanged for bread, but to clothe the soldiers who on every front of the republic are fighting men that are armed and better equipped than themselves. And the soldiers must be fed as well as equipped. Each of the various armies must be considered as yet another non– productive industrial population to be fed even before those whom it is fighting to protect.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

I visited, I suppose, almost all of the Commissariats or Ministries, and there was not one in which I did not hear the complaint that they were being strangled by the war of self – defense in which they were engaged. I heard not a word either in or outside the Commissariat's about carrying the Revolution by force of arms from one end of Europe to the other. These men have no plans of aggression, they thought of nothing else than how, at any cost to get peace in order to relieve the already over strained mechanism of a load which, as they well know, it could not be expected to bear.

Transport Question Supreme.

From whatever point of view one looks at the Russian problem one is faced immediately by this question of transport. They need 17,000 locomotives to put their transport into something like working order. They have 4500. The locomotive works at Kharkov are capable of producing 10 or 12 locomotives a month; other works which could be producing perhaps two or three a month are producing none, their whole productivity strength, being necessarily and unwillingly, used for military purposes. One is faced at once by the question of transport, and side-by-side with that by the question of peace. The best men of each commissariat have had to go to the armies. The commissariats regard their task of reconstruction as almost impossible until those men return.

I talked with Krestinsky, the Commissar of Finance, and he quite frankly described the position in terms of a race between Russia's manufacturing powers, crippled by continued war, and the increasing, and progressively increasing output of paper money. There never was a better illustration than in Russia of the fact that money is a symbol of exchange and not a thing of value in itself. They have no foreign credit, but are prepared to give timber, flax and other raw materials in exchange for the tools, rails, locomotives, steam dredgers and steam excavators which they need. In the same way within the country, trading between town and village becomes a question of direct exchange of things made for things grown. And in the town, as Krestinsky points out, a similar tendency is discernible towards making money of less and less account. Housing, lighting and the post are government monopolies, and the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

workmen, who is partly paid by getting these things free, is rapidly ceasing to estimate his income merely by the paper rouble that he receives each month.

Soviet Reconstruction.

It must not be supposed, however, that those of the Soviet Government who are directly concerned with the economic reconstruction of Russia are postponing all efforts in that direction until the fine weather of peace leaves them free for the work they have planned. The anomaly of Petrograd, the manufacturing city at one end of Russia, the fuel for which is at the other, is to be remedied by the electrification of the factories. Waterpower will be used for this, and a power station is already under construction. Moscow is also being electrified, with a view to utilizing the turf which lies comparatively close at hand instead of the coal of the south. Here also work has been begun.

Certain less important details in the Bolshevik plans for Russia have been hurried to completion, as it were, out of their turn, actually because of the war of which emphasized the need for them. Thus it used not to be possible to take any but the smallest boats through by water from Petrograd to the Volga system. Engineers working for the Soviet have widened and deepened the canals, fearing lest the Russian fleet should fall into the hands of the Allies or the Germans, and determined to save what they could. They have taken through those canals (where a torpedo – boat could not pass before) seven big destroyers, six small destroyers, and four submarine boats. "But for that work," complained the President of the Committee of State Construction, "We had to take men and material from the building of the power station with which we hope to make Petrograd independent of the fuel supply." They had expected to use the water system this summer to relieve in some degree the railways in supplying the starving towns. But the Allies hold the oil wells at Baku, and I doubt whether the Russians have sufficient stores of oil to run the river steamers which depend upon that fuel.

Lack of transport and civil war combined cut them off for a long time from their cotton supplies in Turkestan. They have in Russia a plentiful

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

supply of flax which should have been exported to England. Their machines are for working cotton and not linen. Faced with this new problem certain bourgeois experts working for the central textile organization have discovered three processes for the cottonization of flax. I brought away with me the specimens of these processes at different stages with complete accounts of the processes, which I intend to submit for investigation to the textile department of Leeds University. The Russians claim that they are able in their cotton working machines to use from 50 to 75% of flax. Necessity has also forced them to the discovery of a new salt supply, and the shortage of paraffin has resulted in the invention of a new kind of Bolshevik match which uses the inflammable grease left after washing wool, and, judging from the specimens I secured, strikes a great deal better than the miserable matches we were accustomed to use in Russia before.

What Workers Control Means.

Meanwhile, the need of raising rather than lowering the productivity of their factories in the appalling difficulties in which they are has brought perhaps rather quicker than anyone expected certain modifications in the system they originally proposed. Thus, Workers' Control no longer means that the workmen of a particular factory take command of it, disobeying the directions of any technical expert of whom they do not approve and spend the day as was after all quite natural in the first excitement of the revolution, in holding meetings to discuss the political future of the world. Broadly speaking, they have reasoned as follows: It is quite right that the workers should control the factories. But the workers of each individual factory must remember that they are responsible for that factory to the workers of the whole country to whom the factory belongs. Inefficiency in one factory affects many others, and it is unfair that a community of workers and workers only should suffer for the caprice of any particular small section. Consequently the Administrative Committee that runs a factory contains a sufficient number of representatives of the center of authority (which is after all a workers organization) to give weight to the experts whether commercial or technical, who are there employed. Disputes of any economic character are settled by consultation with the Commissariat or Ministry

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of Labor a central college which contains representatives elected by the All – Russian Executive Committee on the one hand, and by the trade unions on the other, the latter being in a slight majority. Three departments of the Ministry, that for the safeguarding of labor, the regulating of wages, and the distribution of labor, that is to say the three most important departments, are entirely controlled by the trade unions.

Russia And Foreign Trade.

With regard to foreign trade, Krassin, the Commissar for Trade and Industry, told me that foreign trade, being a State monopoly, will be a comparatively simple affair. The State as a whole will purchase what it requires. Russia proposes to pay for what she gets in raw material, flax, timber, etc., of which she has great quantities, but cannot bring them to the ports until her transport is restored. "It will therefore be in the foreigners own interests to help us here." So far their foreign trade has amounted to nothing. They bought and paid for a large quantity of seed corn with a view to improving food conditions in Northern Russia, but though it had been paid for this corn was held up in Denmark and not allowed to be sent to Petrograd. They were also negotiating for scythes and agricultural instruments. They need rails, tractors, steam excavators, dredgers, and most of all locomotives.

Supposing, as many people outside Russia hope that Kolchak and the reactionaries win, any new Government they may set up will have to reckon with all the difficulties which handicap the Moscow Government today. They will also, whether they wish this or not, have to take over much that the Bolsheviks have done. They will not, for example, be able to undo the improvement of the canal system. Nor will they be able to discard the present organization of the factories, without increasing their difficulties by ensuring the violent opposition of the trade unions. It seems to me the proper study of these questions is essential to the interest of England and that England is unnecessarily handicapping alike her judgment and her actions by neglecting the opportunities of inquiry which have, it is true without particular politeness, been flung repeatedly in her face.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. November 26, 1919.

[This is Ransome's first dispatch for the Manchester Guardian.]

Bolshevism and Common Sense

Esthonian Minister on Mr. Lloyd George.

Soviet Outlook Chastened.

Reval, Monday.

I have had an informal interview and luncheon with Professor Piip, who, after temporarily acting as Foreign Minister of Esthonia, is presently returning as diplomatic representative to England. He had no confirmation of the rumour current in the town that fighting in North-west Russia had eased, but considered it not impossible, since neither side has any object in continuing; and for some days the Bolshevik attacks have not resulted in any further advance.

In the negotiations for the exchange of prisoners at Dorpat the Bolsheviks have recognized Esthonian independence, and the Esthonians have already declared they have no desire to attack any Russian Government unless that is necessary in defense of their own frontiers. It is certain that the Esthonians will conclude at least an armistice with the Bolsheviks at the conference at Dorpat in the first days of December.

M. Piip points out that this in no way means the cessation of the struggle against the spread of Bolshevism. Esthonia, is the outpost of democracy, opposed alike to reaction and to Bolshevism. It is a question merely of the choice of weapons. He entirely agrees with Mr. Lloyd George's statement that Bolshevism cannot be suppressed by the Sword. Mr. Lloyd George, as a man of the people, takes a realistic and not a sentimental

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

view. The continuance of the armed struggle means most likely the spreading of Bolshevism by making the conditions in which the growth of Bolshevism is possible. M. Piip instanced Esthouian finance, rising prices, and the depreciating currency. There will be danger if this process continues indefinitely, and it can stop *only* when the cessation of fighting makes possible a return to work and the beginning of the serious exportation of flax and other goods.

I asked M. Piip did he think other States would follow suit in peace-making. He replied that he believed so, though Poland would not follow immediately. In the end Poland would make peace also, for the same factors apply in Poland as in Esthonia, and continuation of the war tends to prolong conditions the accentuation of which would make Bolshevism a serious danger.

Land Nationalization Abandoned.

M. Piip further believes that the extravagant period of the Russian Revolution is already ending. The Bolsheviks no longer expect world revolution, but are concerned to preserve a more or less Socialistic State. They have thrown over the idea of the socialisation of the land, and have been forced to acquiesce in an allotment system. The Bolsheviks are already so far abandoning their original principles that common sense must perceive it is only a question of time before a Government evolves in Russia that is in less violent political contrast to the rest of the world.

Asked how the armistice would affect the transit of materials to the North-western army, M. Piip replied that the North-western army no longer existed as such, so that the difficulty was not likely to arise. The result of the Petrograd attack had been the loss of an enormous number of lives and frightful desolation. The refugees from the theatre of war were in a pitiable condition; the men were literally starving and the women were eating scraps of horseflesh and flour mixed with snow. The

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Esthonians were doing all that was possible, and had appealed to the Americans for help." Some people," added M. Piip, "blame the Esthonians for not taking a more active part in Yudenitch's adventure. It should be remembered that but for the self-sacrifice and energetic assistance of the Esthonians Yudenitch would have been annihilated before

Petrograd.

Further, we have no guarantees that the Pan-Russians will respect our independence, and you cannot without grave risk make a democratic army like ours fight for objects which it cannot understand.

Earlier in the year, if we had had guarantees, we could have persuaded the soldiers that the capture of Petrograd was the way to ensure Esthonian independence."

MG. December 1, 1919.

**Finland And The Attack on Petrograd:
Mannerheim's Failure To Mislead.**

Reval, Friday.

I have just returned from a visit to Helsingfors where I found the situation greatly improved since last March. The mutual mistrust of the Reds and Whites, Pinks and Grays is noticeably less acute, and the atmosphere consequently more hopeful. This has been brought about gradually during the winter by the steady policy of the Government, aimed at undoing the work of those who are trying for ulterior purposes to keep open the old wounds of the civil war. These wounds were recently slightly inflamed, during the period of Yudenitch's attack on Petrograd by sharp differences of opinion and public nervousness on the question

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of Finish intervention. That moment of fever has passed and the atmosphere of Helsingfors today has been definitely cleared by the victory.

In March a new conflict seemed hardly possible, but it is now clear that nothing short of an abrupt and unlikely change of policy will break internal peace. General Mannerheim's open letter roused the hopes of Conservatives, but eventually it lessened his political prestige, when its statements were compared with subsequent events in England and France where speeches showed him wrong in supposing that the Allies intended to force Finland into the conflict.

Rather timorously at first, but with growing confidence, the country is taking the path towards internal reconciliation.

The Use of the White Guards

The Government now decidedly favors an amnesty, not complete, but including all but the chief leaders of the revolt. On the other hand, while approving this policy, the Foreign Minister Holsti, tells me he considers the Socialist ill-advised in their demand for the disbanding of the White Guards. This voluntary force, now numbering 110,000 gives the Whites the sense of security psychologically necessary if distrust is to die a natural death.

Holsti said "You must remember that Finland is bigger than England, Ireland, and Holland together, and has a population of only 3 million. The people live far apart and farmers and lonely houses cannot be forbidden to keep themselves able to resist attacks, which do not come, but would seem likely, they were not in a position to defend themselves."

There have been regrettable speeches and demonstrations by White Guards, but the Left Parties have seen that these demonstrations have not in the slightest degree affected the external policy of the Government, and should therefore be reassured. Further Holsti points out that these volunteer troops are a valuable strengthening of the regular army.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Asked his opinion of the future Holsti replied confidently: "We are not afraid of her internal Bolshevism or Russian attacks. British public opinion is mistaken in believing the internal and external difficulties are still unsettling business conditions in Finland. The rumors of unsettlement spread last spring were unrealized, and during the last eight months internal peace has grown steadily stronger, not weaker."

MG. December 4, 1919.

Esthonian Treatment Of Yudenvitch.

Bolshevik Mistrust.

The Dorpat Conference.

Reval, Tuesday

The heavy attacks on the Narva front are a piece of criminal folly on the part of the Bolsheviks, since if these attacks succeed peace will probably be postponed. Recent Petrograd papers show that the Bolsheviks do not believe the Esthonians sincerely intend peace, and, further, do not believe in the disarmament of the North-west Russian Army. The Bolsheviks resent the fact that the Esthonians prevented the annihilation -of Yudenitch, and are determined not to allow 'him to *reform* in Esthonia. They have therefore carried the attacks beyond the frontier, and to .the north and south-west of Narva they are already in Esthonian territory.

As a matter of fact, this Bolshevik mistrust is unjustified. The Esthonians officially decided to disarm the Russian soldiers on Esthonian territory, and the North-west Russian Government, after dealing out a number of Russian Stanislav decorations to its foreign supporters, ceased to exist except that parts of it still function in the form of relief committees for refugees.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Mr. Poska, the chief of the Esthonian Delegation, leaves Revel tomorrow for Dorpat, *where the* conference opens on Thursday. Mr. Poska is a member of the Nationalist party and a strong anti-Bolshevik; indeed, as Professor Piip points out, the cessation of the war is a measure taken against Bolshevism, and by no means a capitulation to it.

The Bolshevik delegates are Krasin, the Commissart of Trade and Industry, who also held a post corresponding to that of the Minister of Munitions; Joffe, the ambassador to Berlin, who was ejected by the Imperial Government just before the Armistice and since not allowed to return; and Radek, who has recently been enjoying German hospitality in a cell of the Moabit Prison, where an attempt on his life was made while he was exercising in the prison yard. It is not known whether Radek succeeded in reaching Moscow, or whether this appointment is a step towards rescuing him from Germany by diplomatic means.

Esthonian Anti-Bolshevik.

It should be clearly understood in England that, though Esthonian public opinion is as strongly anti-Bolshevik as ever, all but the smallest minority of the nation desire peace. The "Sozial demokraat," the organ of the biggest party of the Constituent Assembly, puts their position clearly. It asks: "Must we wait till someone somewhere does something for us? The results of the world-war are still not liquidated; the Russian question especially is still unsolved."

The journal refers to the proposed news conference of the Allies on the Russian question, and says: "Nothing has changed, and this news conference will be able to do nothing but talk unless it should take a new line. if it takes into consideration the actual state of affairs the new conference can only come to one decision, namely, recognition of Soviet Russia and recognition of her relations with border States. Perhaps the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

— conference will do this, perhaps not. In any case the peoples concerned cannot remain passive spectators. The unsettled state of Russia touches our interests, and we should do all possible towards the elucidation of the Russian question. We must not with closed bands await the Allied Conference, but must make clear our own standpoint with regard to Russia. This is necessary not in our own interests only, but also for the peace of all the world." The article says it is quite useless for representatives of Koltchak and Denikin to meet representatives of the Baltic-States at a special conference in order to express mutual detestation.

MG. December 11, 1919

**Dorpat Negotiations
Hesitating Baltic States.
Fear Of Allies' Attitude.**

Reval, Tuesday.

There are people who order their subordinates to shut doors. There are others so tremendously powerful that they have merely to look at the door, and everyone in the room runs to shut it. The present attitude of the Baltic States towards the Entente is like that of poor folk sitting in a room with one of these tremendously powerful persons. The door towards peace is ajar, but they dare neither open nor shut it, all the time watching the expressionless, secret face of the Entente. The -Entente has not forbidden them to make peace, *but* has not given - the slightest hint as to what will be the attitude of the Allies if they do.

Everyone in the country—except a small group which would willingly give up Esthonian independence in exchange for reaction, to restore their privileges—is anxious for peace. They know that the continuation

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of the war threatens ruin and disruption to the little country which has been at war nearly six years. They cannot bring themselves- to believe that the Entente would take steps against them, remembering how this year they defeated the Germans, and how in their present diplomatic form they are a solid bulwark against German influence in the Baltic. Yet the all-powerful oracle makes no sign of blessing, though it refrains from threats, and they stand half-paralyzed, eagerly reading Mr. Lloyd George's speech -as a sign that the Entente will not be too angry with them, and then frightened again by some other seeming portents. That is a pretty accurate picture of the state of mind of the non-Bolshevik participants in the Dorpat Conference. They play all the time to that dread audience in Paris.

Armistice or Peace?

The. Bolshevik .Delegation, on their arrival, found their freedom strictly limited. M. Krassin, M. Joffe and- their secretary, M. Slishko, are free to walk about, but not to receive journalists or other visitors. Minor members of the party, such as girl typists, &c. are allowed about the town till 2 p.m., but are always under the guard of Esthonian soldiers. • The Esthonian attitude at the commencement of the Conference was closely modelled on the attitude of M.. Clemenceau at Versailles, with the result that the Bolsheviks complain that Esthonia at Dorpat behaves more like a conqueror than Germany at Brest-Litovsk.

Nor is this the only unhopeful symptom. The Russian Delegation insist that they came to discuss peace, and professed surprise on learning that the Esthonians are only prepared to discuss an armistice. This fundamental question has now been adjourned while both the delegations consult their Governments as to what is the precise object of the conference. An armistice alone, while of great value to Esthonia, means little to Russia, because it would entail

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the retention of the army on this front. Peace would enable the Russians to withdraw the army, thereby removing a big, unproductive population, and so would greatly ease the task of feeding Petrograd. Peace would also mean that Russia would be able to get agricultural implements, &c., from abroad, which as articles of trade between the towns and rural districts would immediately, result in at least partial relief for the starving, town-dwellers. This is highly undesirable from the point of view of the *emigres*, who base their-hopes on the starvation of their countrymen.

Letts and Bolsheviks.

The Esthonians also, while fundamentally less afraid of the Bolsheviks than of *the emigres* have a real fear lest the resumption of trade should open the way to propaganda. Therefore it is possible that the Conference may split on this first point. Meanwhile, until it has been settled whether the Conference is discussing peace or an armistice, it is proceeding with minor matters. Everyone on the Esthonian side realizes the immense seriousness of their decision, and the spectacle of this little democratic Republic shivering between the fears of the Bolshevik devil and the deep sea of blockade is really pathetic.

Although it had been definitely settled that the Letts would take part in the conference with the Bolsheviks, ten minutes before the first session of the Dorpat Conference the President of 'the Lettish Delegation announced that they were temporarily unable to do so. The Lettish delegates took no part in the first two days' proceedings. To-day, however, when the Esthonian-Bolshevik Conference was postponed till the evening owing to absence of M. Piip and other delegates, who delayed their return journey from Reval, at twelve o'clock the whole of the Lettish Delegation visited the rooms in the Conference house set apart for the Bolsheviks, and there held a

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

conference with the Bolshevik Delegation. The Lithuanian delegates and M. Radek have not yet arrived.

MG December 13 1919.

**Esthonian – Bolshevik Negotiations.
Approaching A Frontier Agreement.**

Reval, Thursday.

It is now clear that a critical question for the Dorpat Conference will be that of guarantees against the further use of Estonia as a springboard for new attacks on Russia. The Estonians refused to discuss this while still at war.

Meanwhile, discussions of other matters is proceeding with a seemingly sincere effort on both sides to arrive at agreement. Today the question of frontiers was fully discussed both from historical and ethnographical points of view. In the preliminary bargaining each side made offers quite unacceptable to the other. Finally the Bolsheviks made an offer of frontiers which more or less closely correspond with the natural frontiers of Esthonia. This offer will be the subject of further debate at Dorpat.

MG, December 18, 1919.

**Starvation Of Russia
Effects Of War & Lack Of Transport.
Food Stores Out of Reach.**

Reval, Tuesday.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

It is not precise to say that the Russian people are starving amid plenty, it is at least true that their country contains large stores of food which are inaccessible. The food laboriously collected at the depots cannot be sent where it is needed owing to lack of transport consequent upon the continued war and the necessary use of all wagons and locomotives by the Army. This was the burden of a detailed report made by Stiurupa, the Peoples Commissary of Supply, to the Seventh All Russian Assembly of Soviets now sitting at Moscow. The following figures concerning the State supplies of food, which will be distributed by the card system, do not include figures of illegitimate buying and selling at prices infinitely higher than those fixed by the Government.

The situation is worse in regard to meat. Last year 5 million poods were prepared; this year less than a million. The reason for this failure is partly the actual lack of cattle, partly the impossibility of bringing the meat from Siberia. There will be meat only for the Army and for children. The shortage of fats will be greater this year than last. With regard to fish, 6 million poods were prepared, equaling 75% of the amount in a normal good year before the war, but the transport service were unable to bring the fish to the hungry towns. Thus there are enormous stores of fish in Astrakhan, but the only means of transporting it to Saratov is a narrow gauge railway in poor condition, on which only extremely limited traffic is possible. It will be impossible to count on making up the fish for lack of meat. There are 30% more potatoes than last year, in spite of the fact that owing to the destructive raid by Mamontoff through parts of the provinces of Voronesh, Kursk, Tamboff, Orel, and Tula. These provinces, which last year provided 75% of the total potato supply, this year supplied only 16.

Mamontoff's raid had also disastrous effects on the bread supply. Last year these provinces supplied nearly 8 times as much as this year. On the other hand, many districts have supplied more than twice what was expected from them, and the total bread supply is 20% better than last year. The main difficulty is transport. The Commissary mentioned individual stations where there are huge supplies of flour which cannot be moved owing to the weakness of the transport and other stations,

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

where he had to restrain the accumulation of potatoes because it was impossible to move the stores before they began to spoil.

Rykov, President of the Council of Public Economy, who followed with a report on the fuel situation, blamed the transport for the present crisis in heating material, pointing out that in normal times nearly 80% of oil and coal was used on the railways and in the factories, and that Denikin and the Allies have cut off supplies, both thereby compelling the uneconomic use of wood on the railways.

MG. December 19 1919.

Esthonia's Dilemma.

Distrust Of Bolshevik Intentions.

A Peace Conference Interrupted.

Reval, Tuesday.

The vision of peace is fading like the smoke of the Narva Battle. During the last few days hopes have been steadily falling with the many indications of the possible failure of the negotiations. Paris ten days ago made it clear by telegram that they desired friendly attitude of Estonia towards Judenitch's forces, but peace with Russia is impossible while the Russians have ground to fear that further attacks on Petrograd are being initiated on Esthonian soil. This contradiction complicates both the question of the armistice and of the frontiers.

This unfortunate little country is between the upper and the nether millstone. The Liberal Esthonians, that is, the whole of the present Government, held to their faith in the Allies even throughout the difficult period of German occupation. They are unwilling to offend them now. The people, as a whole support this Government, and are probably anti-German, but view the Russian reactionary forces with distrust only second to their distrust of the Germans, besides – as a democratic nation and army – having contempt for their efforts to return to the old ways.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Only a small minority on the Extreme Right view the Russians favorably, just as they would view any force tending in the long run to restore their lost privileges. Not only the Socialist but the Liberal papers in Esthonia attack the Extreme Right on these grounds, reminding them of their friendly attitude to the Germans during the occupation and accusing them of holding a dubious position during the invasion of the Landswehr. Thus “Vaba”:

This party and its organs “Kaja” is not acting in the interest of Estonia when it takes the Northwest Army under its protection. We learn from “Kaja” (with regard to the telegram of the Supreme Council, that Estonia has no right to dispute with Western Europe, and should be ready in the interest of Western Europe even to sacrifice her own independence. But, all the same, the Allies have no right to demand of the Estonian people that they should pour out their blood in the interests of Western Europe.

It is ironic that the same minority which welcomed the Germans should now be welcoming what it believes to be the Allied policy when that, like the German occupation, is contrary to the desires of the nation as a whole.

Esthonians, however, are in an extremely difficult position, and it is possible that this minority, though itself powerless, may see its wishes brought about by extraneous forces. A break in the conference, or diplomatic postponement, has been expected, and Mr. Poska’s move today [proposing the adjournment of the conference until January 13 next, and expressing doubt of the sincere desire of the Soviet to bring about peace] is no surprise, though it’d been thought it would occur after not before Mr. Krassin’s return from Moscow, where the latter is consulting the Soviet Government. The definite postponement has been put off at Mr. Jowe’s request till tomorrow, when the Russian General Kkostyayeff returns. There is grave doubt whether the military expert will be able to say anything that will affect the situation

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Later, Midnight.

I learned that Krassin whose so early return as unexpected crossed the front this evening and will be here tomorrow, as well as Kostyaveff, who crossed the front this morning. Therefore there is some slight hope of a change in the present outlook.

MG. December 27, 1919.

First Step to Peace in The Baltic?

Esthonia's Christmas Hopes.

No Pressure From England or America.

Reval, Tuesday.

There has been a general clearing of the atmosphere. The main obstacle to agreement—namely the doubtful position regarding Yudenitch's troops—is now removed and the Esthonians are distinctly hopeful. The minor and major questions of frontiers and the form of guarantees against preparation for further attack have been handed over to the Conciliation Committees.

The Esthonians are urging that they cannot retreat from -the present positions, which are their only good line of defence, while the civil war is undecided in Russia and while they might have to defend themselves against Denikin, Koltchak, or some other general bent on restoring the original frontiers of the Russian Empire, or against the Bolsheviks, if these should change their policy..

With regard to guarantees, there is already no disagreement in principle. The question is only one of method. There is reason to hope that fighting will cease before Christmas, with Esthonia enjoying an armistice and the possibility of a partial return to productive work.

The remnants of the North-western Army which are the main embarrassment, will have to shift elsewhere—so far it remains

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

undecided where, though efforts were made at the conference at Riga to persuade the unwilling Letts, who regard Bermondts and Yudenitch in much the same way, to give hospitality to the troops of the one immediately after disposing of the troops of the other.

In any case the North-western Army will not be reformed in Esthonia, and this decision may be welcomed as the first step towards peace in the Baltic, besides being notable victory for common sense. I am happy to be able definitely to say that neither English nor American influence has been used in trying to force a contrary decision.

MG December 29, 1919.

**Peace Preliminaries At Dorpat.
Hope Deferred.**

Reval, Christmas Day.

The cessation of hostilities between Bolsheviki and Esthonians was postponed owing to a disagreement at Dorpat on the detail of the frontiers. Late last night a full agreement was reached. The Commissions set yesterday and half the previous night over disputed points, and yesterday's session succeeded so far that the delegates were able to prepare drafts of the armistice conditions and the preliminary treaty terms, which include the recognition of Esthonian independence, the provisional settlements of frontiers, and the guarantees against future attack.

It was confidentially expected that the treaty would be signed soon after midnight. After the agreement had been prepared, however, a dispute that arose between the military representatives over the question of the fortification of the Narva River gave a new turn to the negotiations. The Esthonians allege that the Russians had agreed with their own understanding on this point; the Russians, however, thought otherwise, and were unable to yield without consulting Moscow. At 2:30 this morning the Conference was adjourned. Till the last moment it seems

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

certain that the “Cease fire” would sound on Christmas morning. Civilian delegates on both sides spoke as if the thing were assured. I am writing in the train, where I sit in company with the Esthonian delegates going to Reval. These think Moscow will agree to rectification in agreement with the Esthonian view. The Russians have always said they regard the frontiers as less important than guarantees, and an agreement on the latter question is now definite. Yudenitch’s force is to leave Esthonia. Thus the fist is withdrawn from the boxing glove, and from the Russian point of view is of minor importance whether the glove was big small so long as it is not used to cover a foreign offensive.

I am informed that the frontiers are not final, and will be the subject of a wide the plebiscite after civil war ends. The agreement, if signed when the conference reassembles, does not amount to peace; it is scarcely more than a settlement of this fundamental points necessary as a prelude to peace negotiations.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

VOLUME III.

DISPATCHES FOR 1920.

MG. January 5 1920.

**Russian – Esthonian Armistice
The Conference Scene.
First Step Towards Peace.**

Reval, December 31.

I was present at the signing of the Treaty for the cessation of hostilities, which does not come into force until the third because of the time involved in informing Moscow by communication through the front, a direct wire not being permitted. The ceremony was unimposing. The delegates rose from their seats around the oval conference table and signed and affixed their seals to the documents at small tables at each end of the room. These tables were immediately afterwards appropriated as camera stands while the Conference posed for its photograph.

Poska, leader of the Esthonian Delegation, white haired old Conservative, a typical successful barrister of the old regime, faced the black bearded Joffe, whose career has included 20 years of revolutionary activity, but there was no striking contrast in dress or manner between the delegations, and the only picturesque touch was given by a young Esthonian Bolshevik, the Commissar of Education at Pakoff, who accompanied the Russian Delegation as translator. He was sitting at a side table in high top boots and a gorgeous red jersey. This

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

was merely an extravagance of youth, and the other Bolshevik delegates were indistinguishable from ordinary Europeans.

Sitting near Joffe was Count Bedendorff, son of the former Russian Ambassador in London, who has newly arrived from Moscow as the naval expert of the Bolshevik Delegation. He asked after his London friends, Bell, Chesterton, and Maurice Bearing, and laughed at the idea of any change being forced on Russia. "The Soviet Government is the real, actual Government of the country, and it is ridiculous not to recognize the fact."

The Bolshevik Desire for Peace.

Afterwards in the lobby I talked to Mr. Joffe, and asked whether he thought definite peace would follow. He replied: "That is what we desire. We conceded really more than Esthonia had a right to ask ethnographic way, including Isborsk (20 miles west of Pskoff) being placed within the Esthonian frontier. Further, we have contented ourselves with extremely slight guarantees. We have, however, thereby demonstrated to the world the sincerity of Russia's desire to live at peace with even the smallest neighbors, and have shown that we are ready to make real concessions in order to obtain the opportunity of turning to useful productive work instead of the unproductive activities of war."

Tonight's treaty is a very small step towards peace, but it is important because it is the first step. It is merely a recognition, in the form of the cessation of fighting, that an agreement has been reached on three points, many remaining to be discussed. These points are the recognition of Esthonian independence, agreement on the frontiers, and military guarantees. I have obtained a copy of the treaty. The final frontier gives Esthonia rather more land east of the Narva River, otherwise it differs only very slightly from that I described in the telegram before Christmas.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Finnish Neutrality.

The two last points of agreement concerning guarantees are of especial interest to England, and are therefore telegraphed in full. The parties agree:

In the event of the neutralization of the Finnish Gulf, to participate in the neutralization on conditions worked out with all interested States and established by the necessary international agreements, and also, in case this is established by such international agreements, to put their naval forces, or part of them, in a condition corresponding to do the amends of such international agreements.

Finally;

In the event of international recognition of the permanent neutrality of Esthonia, Russia for her part binds herself to observe this neutrality and share in guaranteeing the preservation of this neutrality.

Esthonian Diplomatic Gains

A statement at the end of the treaty on the recognition of Esthonian independence, "No sort of obligation with regard to Russia arises for the Esthonian land or people from their former appurtenance to Russia," does not affect Esthonia's decision to bear a proportionate burden of the foreign debt of the old Russian Empire.

The agreement with regard to military guarantees does not name Yudenvitch's forces, but amounts to an agreement not to allow them to remain in Esthonia and to immobilize their military stores until January 1, 1922. Fees provisions, however, do not come into effect until after the ratification of a peace treaty. As the peace treaty itself lies in the dim future and ratification is still more distant while after January 10 hostilities can recommence after only 24 hours notice, the agreement is scarcely more than an academic statement of what would happen in

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

circumstances that have not hitherto arisen, may possibly not arise, and do not materially improve the Bolshevik position.

Esthonia, on the other hand, has now certain birds in hand, having gained formal recognition of independence and definite frontiers as a basis of discussion with any future Russian Government or with the Soviet Government. Further, she is able indefinitely to postpone the fulfillment of the guarantees and to reenter the war without losing either of these diplomatic games.

Distrust of Russian Reactionaries.

Probably much depends on the attitude of the Baltic Conference, which is to meet at Helsingfors in January. But I do not think it likely that this conference will take a hostile view. The Lett's regard Yudenvitch's troops as equally dangerous with Bermond's, and have every reason to believe they are privately negotiating with Soviet Russia. I hear they made rather wild territorial claims, including both Dvinsk and Velikie Luki, but they will probably follow Esthonia's lead. If they get Latgalia by diplomatic means they, like Esthonia and Finland, will be without adequate motive for attack on Russia.

All three States have had greater experience than the Allies in estimating the comparative value of the promises and intentions of Russian reactionaries, and are filled with deep mistrust of them. In each country the Russian reaction finds wholehearted support only among strongly pro-German elements. The big Left majorities of each country are opposed alike to the local pro-German reactionaries and to fighting on behalf of Russian reaction. Thus, if only the States concerned were Russia and the Baltic regions, last night's limited Esthonian – Russian agreement could be taken as a definite promise of an eventual peace in northeastern Europe.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. January 5, 1920.

Esthonia's New Era.

Peace Demonstrations At Dorpat.

A Burst Of Singing.

Reval, Saturday.

For the Esthonians New Years Day was the happiest they have had since 1914, if not for the last 700 years. It was the first day on which, since the first declaration of war by Germany in 1914, the Esthonians have been able to count on the cessation of hostilities, and the whole country is now rejoicing in the promise of freedom and peace.

General Leidoner's message to the troops was hurriedly printed and passed from hand to hand. The news spread quickly, and the whole population of Dorpat poured out into the streets. In the evening the dinner of the Peace Delegation was turned without a premeditation into a demonstration of Esthonian nationality. The British and American journalist greeted the censor singing "For he's a Jolly Good Fellow." The Esthonians replied with first one song and then another, and soon all else was forgotten as they sang the oldest music in the world, ancient folk melodies preserved through long centuries of subjection, songs from Esthonia proper, songs from the islands of Oesel and Dago, songs from the Peteboro district, which by yesterday's treaty is now first recognized as part of Esthonia.

As first one and then another joined in the splendid old part – songs we forgot that the sorted drudgery of the negotiations in our respect for the proud, tenacious national spirit of the little country whose guests we were.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. January 16, 1920.

**The Demoralization Of Anti—Bolsheviks.
White Generals Charge Of Corruption
Where English Gold Went.**

Reval, Wednesday.

It is impossible to paint a clearer picture of the demoralization of the White Russians than in their own words. A few months ago their newspapers here, full of respect for the Northwest Government, printed the wildest boasts about the immediate fall of the Soviet Government that were laughable to any who knew the state of affairs on the other side of the front. Now their whole tone has changed. Everything in the following telegram is taken direct from White newspapers.

Today's leader in the "Svoboda Rossii" hitherto known as a Yudenvitch paper, pleads for an amnesty from the Bolsheviks for refugees wishing to return. "It would be quite unjust to consider that any considerable number left their native places from any reasoned attraction to the Whites." They left simply from fear of a new bombardment.

To this must be added the boasting declarations of the army leaders: "In a few days we shall return, and then we will show any who did not leave with us what is the reward of friendship with the enemy." "The refugees are not children, and were not tumbled from the moon. They come from Soviet Russia, and know what awaits them there, and have the right to decide their own fate." The touch about the threats of the White leaders when forced to retire would have been unthinkable even a month ago.

The "Svoboda Rossii" prominently prints a report of the Estonian Internal Minister on State refugees and Northwest soldiers, their appalling conditions and lack of hygiene, "Saddest of all," says the report, "is the fact that the Russians themselves remain absolutely indifferent with regard to this danger, and so far have taken no steps to improve matters. One of the Generals was supposed a month ago to occupy himself in

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

building barracks for the sick, but to this day he has done nothing whatever. The Estonians are organizing a struggle against the danger of epidemics. The independent Russian medical organizations are abolished, as they have shown complete incompetence. Similarly, the Russian Red Cross will be liquidated because it has not raised a finger in the struggle against infectious diseases.”

Capitalist and Proletariat.

The same paper prints an article on Herr Kautsky's criticism of Bolshevism in which he foresaw catastrophe for it, and concludes thus: “But Russian communism can use of itself Pushkin's words: “And much since then has changed in life for me, and I, myself obedient to the general law, have also changed.” And in the cardinal question of the dictatorship of the proletariat the Soviet Government is clearly ready to make concessions. According to the foreign press Trotsky said that with the conclusion of general peace will come the end of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In this way the catastrophe which Kautsky expects in this land is not unavoidable, and with regard to that one must say “Thank God!” because such a catastrophe would be a blow not only to the privileges of the proletariat but also to the natural rights and achievements of democracy.”

Another article in the same paper says: “And if Bolshevism is serious there are surprises for capital on its internal front of the industrial towns. Which is worse? The near future will decide, but now it is possible to say with more or less certainty that economies will conquer the romanticism of certain politicians and will force the Russian question to enter on a new phase.”

A New Savior of Russia.

I have before me the first two numbers of a newspaper supporting a new savior of Russia, who is a candidate for Allied support. This is General Balaovitch, who, after escaping arrest by the Northwest Russians, joined the Estonians and is now seemingly working independently. A few days ago the “Svoboda Rossii” printed an article suggesting that perhaps

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Balahovitch was grossly wronged. Now in his own paper, the "Verni" ("True Road"), he begins a new career with a vigorous onslaught on those whom the Allies hitherto supported he claims that the cavalry which he brought with him when he deserted from the Red Army was the foundations of the Northwest Russian forces, and says everything was going splendidly until "there came to me generals with their staffs."

He says he lent the Northwest Russian Army a million rubles taken from the Reds, which money was not repaid, though he needed it to pay his own soldiers. Among the accusations circulated against him was the forging of money. Balahovitch says Rodvianko ordered him to forge Kerensky roubles for distribution in the enemy's rear. He says he put his whole life into his work and "it was quite unnecessary to send three regiments with cannon and armoured trains to arrest him and his staff." He also alleges that English money remained in the hands of the generals, etc., and that the soldiers were paid in worthless paper. His own soldiers were in first rate condition "when the Northwest Army's was falling to pieces, when it's hungry, ragged soldiers, deserted by their generals, began to bolt in all directions, while the generals, their pockets full of English pounds, departed abroad whence they came."

There is no need to add anything to the picture of internecine warfare among the White leaders illustrated by such recriminations. The second number of the same paper describes the prevailing system of the White reestablishers of Russia. "This is the system of mechanical armed conquest and military government of liberated districts by authority to rain to the native population. This is the system of martial law, governors-general and compulsory mobilization of the population. This is a system of an expeditionary force waging civil war in purely Russian districts in the same manner as war was waged in Galicia, East Prussia, and other territories conquered by force of arms in 1914. This is the system of political, national, and economic bleeding of these districts and the destruction of the remains of the economic organization of the local inhabitants who have taken no direct part in the struggle, but who suffer most severely in their own skins by the comings and goings of foreign visiting authority, now White, now Red. We Liberal spectators of

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the struggle have been saying this for a long time. It is interesting that it should now be confirmed by the authority of a White general.

MG. January 20, 1920

Baltic Conference And Russia.

Conflicting Aims.

Petliura And New Plans Of Campaign.

Helsingfors, Sunday.

The cardinal fact about the Baltic Conference is that it represented two directly opposed opinions among the delegates regarding the object for which the Conference was called, with the possible exception of the Estonians, whose country is practically unanimous against further war. In the other border States opinion is divided into two camps, one regarding the Conference as a means to peace, the other regarding it as a preparation for war. In Finland the reactionary and Pro-German papers consider the Conference as the first towards a new Russian campaign. In Poland also and Lettland Radicals and Socialist favor peace, and it is already obvious that if the ultimate result of the Conference should be a resumption of war, internal disagreements will be accentuated in each one of the countries concerned.

France, however, through her own representatives in the Baltic and indirectly through Poland, has made it abundantly clear that nothing less than military action against Soviet Russia will win her approval, and the comparative silence of the other Allies is widely taken as a sign of acquiescence in French policy. A further Polish – Lettish offensive may play the same part in increasing the difficulty of this Conference as the Yudenvitch offensive played in sterilizing the Estonian Bolshevik meeting at Pskoff last autumn.

This Lettish offensive is said to have a limited objective, which, however may open the way to larger operations, and the name of Petliura now a

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

refugee at Warsaw, is mentioned as the possible organizer of the new army in the Ukraine. M. Vasilievsky, the Polish delegates here, informed the "Hufundstadsblader" that Petliura is well supplied with funds, but expressed ignorance of their source. He told the "Helsinki Sanomat," however, that there could be no question of a military expedition into Russia proper. But any serious attempt to repeat the German policy of 1918 in occupying the Ukraine from the West would mean that peace with Russia would be postponed another year, with the result that it might well become impossible.

The position of Lithuania is different from that of other States, since her main concern is the Lithuanian territory occupied by Polish troops. This question is being discussed in Committee, and the Conference would have fully justified itself if it were to result in setting up some form of Baltic Hague, where such Polish, Lithuanian, Estonian, and Lettish questions can be settled less expensively than by force. A member of the Estonian Delegation told me the Conference would do well at the present moment of conflicting interests if any two of the States came to an agreement. He suggested that the Finnish and Estonian attitudes were not irreconcilable. Powerful influences were working, however, in the hope of making the Conference merely an instrument for organizing a fighting Coalition and the continuance of the war.

This would mean disaster for Estonia and serious danger for Finland, as businessmen here are beginning to recognize. The manager of the Finnish National Bank wrote an article saying: "Every new mark of Finnish paper money is more dangerous than a Bolshevik pamphlet." So long as trade with Russia is unresumed it is impossible to put a brake on the printing machine.

MG. January 22, 1920.

**The Class Warfare In Finland.
Whites Interested In War.
Hope In Trade With Russia.**

Helsingfors, Tuesday.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The efforts of the more liberal – minded members of the present Government to draw their country out of the period of naked class – warfare are meeting with every kind of opposition from the extreme Right. Thus, as already telegraphed, a majority of the Government strongly favor the General Amnesty Bill, which has now been passed by the Diet. However, the Supreme Court, which was consulted by the President, advises him to exercise his power of veto. The Swedish reactionary and Finnish Conservative papers urge that the President shall not sign the bill. Passing the bill would mean the release of several thousands of political offenders and the restoration of their civil rights to something like 30,000 Socialist, and the consequent increase in the Socialist vote, which is considered highly undesirable by the Conservatives.

The Extreme Right, led by the Swedish Finns, are shocked and disquieted by the fact that in spite of all the events of the last two years the Socialist vote is still the most considerable in the country. Among irresponsible people there is much foolish talk of the need “to give the Reds another lesson,” and even, if necessary, to provoke insurrection for the sake of being able to put it down. The Swedish – Finn poet Bertel Gripenberg wrote an article in the “Svenskee Tidningen” which the Liberal papers describe as a criminal suggestion of the necessity of a coup d’état by the Whites. Even the “Uusi Suomi,” the most Conservative of the Finnish papers, though rebuking the Liberal papers for taking this view, rebukes “the Swedish – minded,” and says they will receive no support from Finnish quarters. The Swedish Conservative papers, however, support Gripenberg.

The object of the Conservatives, obviously, is to prolong the feeling of nervousness in the country as the only means of retaining their influence and possibly of regaining power. The object of the Liberals is to allay nervousness on one side, and on the other to reassure Socialist against the fear that circumstances may produce a new dictatorship.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Conscripts and Reds in Sympathy.

As a matter of fact the Reds, being unarmed, are incapable of insurrection. Armed revolt would only become possible in the event of a Finnish attack on Russia, in which event the difference in political color between the conscript army and the White Guards might become emphasized and lead to civil war. There is a notorious sympathy between a certain proportion of the conscript army and the Finnish Reds on the Russian side of the frontier, and smuggling of the most profitable kind goes on unchecked. It is almost impossible to check it. The announcement from Paris that trade with Russia is permissible is hailed by the Finnish Liberals as the first sign of peace, and may lead to legitimate traffic which would automatically end the smuggling. It is more and more clear that peace with Russia is the only policy that would enable Finnish Liberalism to consolidate its position. For this reason peace is opposed by the Whites, who believe the war would make them again supreme, and that they would be able by ruthless measures to suppress the revolt that would almost inevitably follow. The Socialist, of course, cannot on principle oppose peace, but undoubtedly the extremer Reds see in the continuation of the struggle their best hope of ousting Moderates and Whites alike.

MG. January 23 1920.

End Of Baltic States Conference.

Influences From Paris.

Playing To The Great Powers.

Helsingfors, Tuesday.

The Baltic Conference did not come to any very important decision. All the participants seem to be leaving it confirmed in the opinion that each held before coming. Thus the Estonians return determined to make peace with Russia, the Poles continue to talk of an invasion of Russia, possibly in concert with Petliura; the Lithuanians have had an opportunity of explaining to the other border States their hostility to the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Poles. In this connection the Poles say that the Lithuanians proposed to the border States an alliance against Poland, which was certainly not in the original program of the conference. The Lithuanians, however, give a different story, saying that since Poland occupied territory beyond the demarcation line fixed by the Allies they have been unable to take part in discussions with them, and withdrew from the conference, retaining merely a watching brief.

Finland retains her original position. Poland emphasized the fact that she was not in the same position as the border States, being an anciently established country and not a new creation awaiting recognition. The Lettish representative considers it regrettable that Koltchak and Denikin failed thereby emphasizing the difference between his position and that of the Estonian representative.

All the countries, without exception, were, like the participants in the Dorpat conference, playing to the audience of the Great Powers, and foreign events had more influence on the mood of the conference than the opinions of any one of the peoples immediately concerned. Thus the French election seems to have modified Polish belligerence, and the Supreme Council's decision to open a chink in the blockade confirmed the Estonian impulse towards peace.

MG. January 24, 1920.

**The New Invasion Of Russia.
Baltic Agreements Delayed.
Bolsheviks And The Poles.**

Helsingfors, Friday.

The general situation of the Baltic State Conference and of each participant – torn between the peaceful desires of the bulk of the population in each case and the warlike desires of each countries Conservatives, the latter finding some support among the Conservatives

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

in Paris – is well illustrated by the almost comically circumspect wording of the resolution with regard to Russia. This resolution says that countries partaking in the Conference will "conform to the attitude of the Entente in so far as is compatible with the vital interests of each country."

Later.

At 1 o'clock this morning the Conference decided to sit another day. The Polish – Lithuanian question is being discussed in special committee. I am told the belligerent attitude of the Poles is further modified by the news that their advance against Russia has been stopped. No one who knows Russia will be surprised that the Polish attack is meeting with vigorous resistance. If anything can ensure that wavering patriots would rally to the support of Soviet Russia it would be an attack by this race in particular.

MG. January 26 #1 1920.

The White Terror In The Bid For Petrograd.

An Officers Story.

Koltchak In Soviet Hands.

Captured Treasure.

Helsingfors, Saturday.

A young officer in the North West Army, the publication of whose name would expose him to serious danger, who took part in the Yudenvitch advance on Petrograd and was completely disillusioned by what he then saw, volunteered the following statement.

"I am convinced of one thing," he said, "that this whole business of war against the Bolsheviks leads to nothing but the destruction of Russia itself and of honest men on both sides. We started out with the belief in words like democracy, but the moment our advance looked like being successful the Northwest Government was pushed on one side like a

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

baby, and the real intentions of our leaders became clear. I have heard of the Red Terror. It could not be worse than the White Terror, in which I have actually taken part.”

I interrupted him with the statement that certain English newspapers had announced that there had been only a very small number of executions – something under 40 – on the road to Petrograd.

He replied: “it is false. The general order, not so far as I know, in writing but understood by everybody, was ‘Kill all Communist and all Jews’. One officer boasts that he alone killed 64. It was said that that was quite just, as they are all Communists. I asked if he was particularly bitter against the Reds, and was told that he had lost an estate. As most Communist retired with the Reds we kill people who had any connection with the Soviet institutions. They even wanted to kill a girl of 17 or less who was a Communist. I begged her off, and she kissed me publicly, which was very awkward. I was also able to save a schoolmaster.”

“Was he a Communist?”

“No, but he had been on friendly terms with them. They caught the wife of a Communist – a woman with a child at her breasts – and were going to shoot her, what with great difficulty and the help of a friend I succeeded in preventing that.

A Campaign of Destruction.

“If these things came under my personal observation you may imagine what was the total of terror on the whole front,” the officer proceeded. “The worst of it was that we did nothing but destroy. I am convinced from what I saw that before our coming there was a more or less efficient working organization of local government in the village Soviets. We destroyed it and put back a local autocracy in the persons of officials and military commanders whose object was to get out of the villages what they could. As a man with some feeling of humanity I suffered from

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

what I saw. We captured the estates run by agricultural communes – a sort of State farms. Considering all the difficulty they were in good condition, well-stocked with beasts, geese, etc. all well cared for. We literally sacked them, handing them over to soldiers, killed even the cows, after which we restored the estate to his pre-revolutionary owner.”

“What became of these owners when you left?”

”They retired with us,” the officer replied. They had been living in or near their homes. We came, destroyed, gave them back the ruins for a few days, then allowed them to become refugees with us. And even if we had not retired what could they have done? Our people had sacked the estates which the Reds had organized, and the old owners have no capital with which to run these estates themselves. It was the same everywhere. The Reds have preserved palaces, etc. absolutely untouched. There was a different story to tell after we had left them.”

MG. January 26 #2 1920.

The Baltic Conference Breaks Up.

“No Separate Peace” Pact Rejected.

An Allied Move Awaited

Reval, Saturday.

I was the only correspondent who traveled by icebreaker from Helsingfors to Reval with the Estonian, Polish, Lettish, and Lithuanian Delegations returning from the Baltic Conference. The Finnish admiral and the Finnish diplomatic representative in Estonia accompanied the delegations. Ten languages were talked on board, and in this babel of shouted words it was difficult to hear oneself speak amid the continuous thunder of the grinding of the ice as the boat plowed a pathway through the frozen snow – covered sea.

The delegates, who during the conference had more or less preserved an official distance from each other, laid officialdom aside and

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

exchanged views as freely as friends at a picnic. The general impression was hopeful, everyone admitting that this conference had been more useful than the last and had cleared the atmosphere, and promised that the next conference, which will probably be held at Riga when the external position is clearer, will give more definite results.

I learned that towards the end of the conference: Poland recognized the existence of Lithuania as an independent State. But though on doubtful frontier questions all, in principle, favor plebiscites, yet there is not a single question in which both sides are willing to abide by the result.

Poland, Finland, and Lettland supported a resolution that no Baltic State should make peace with Russia without the agreement of all the others. Estonia resolutely opposed this, which would enable any single State to retard the general peace, but expressed readiness not to make peace without informing the others. The resolution was dropped. Estonia is still the only State with a definite peace policy, but on many sides I heard the opinion that she is the pioneer in whose footsteps the rest of the world must eventually follow. Lithuania was supposed at Helsingfors to be the State next likely to make peace, but the Lithuanian representative told me he did not believe a real peace was possible for the small States until the Allies change their policy and definitely begin encouraging peace instead of war.

**MG January 27 1920 #1. Getting Accustom To The Idea Of Peace.
Estonians Changed Views.**

Riga, Sunday.

The local White newspaper, "Svoboda Rossii" until recently an organ of Yudenvitch, reflecting the rapidly changing attitude of the émigrés, writes: –

"When Estonia decides to open negotiations and is prepared to conclude an armistice, careful people (not worth while speaking of those who love fighting for the sake of filling their pockets) were horrified. It seemed

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

that today or tomorrow the Bolsheviks would burst into Reval, destroy the Government, cut to pieces half the population, and set up a Commune. But already, after a month and a half, negotiations continue quite satisfactorily. Everyone is accustomed to them, and nothing special has happened except that the valuable blood and Estonian and Russian soldiers no longer flows out in a river, the public wealth is no longer wasted in flames and powder and smoke, and the heads and houses of peaceful citizens are no longer broken by shells."

Further, on the subject of the blockade, the journal says: –

"The lifting of the blockade frightens by its novelty, whereas all have forgotten how the blockade was established, how gradually and almost unnoticed it entered into our life and consciousness, how it caused scarcely any harm to the Bolsheviks. It lay heavily merely on the Russian people, depriving it of absolute necessities not only for life but even for death. It forced down the life of the Russian people to primitive form, deprived them of all imported goods – agricultural machinery, cloth, instruments."

The paper expresses the view that the lifting of the blockade will create new conditions in Russia which will make the fall of the Bolsheviks possible.

MG. January 27, 1920.

Thrown Back From Petrograd

Yudenvitch's Failure Described From Within Russia.

How The People Of The City Went Out To Fight The Whites.

The Impression Produced In Moscow.

It will be remembered that at the end of October last Yudenvitch, the head of the North-western White Army, broke through the Bolshevik front and penetrated almost to the suburbs of Petrograd. For a few days it was expected he would capture the city. Instead he was driven back until at

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

last his army, almost in the state of dissolution, had to take refuge in Estonia.

It has never been satisfactorily explained in this country either how Yudenvitch came to reach Petrograd so easily or how he came to be not only defeated but broken.

As it happens, after the return of Mr. W. T. Goode from Moscow, another special correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian" succeeded in entering Soviet Russia, and was there at the time of Yudenvitch advance and defeat. His account of the whole episode has now reached us, and is printed below. In it he describes how Yudenvitch came to break through the Bolshevik front, how his enterprise came to complete disaster, and what sort of impression was produced at Moscow by the expectation that he might capture Petrograd, and what effect, if any, that event would have had on the stability of the Bolshevik regime.

The Explanation.

It is now possible to estimate the results of the combined Russian, Estonian and British attack on Petrograd. The attack, it will be remembered, was suddenly undertaken at the moment when peace negotiations had been definitely arranged between Soviet Russia and at least one of the Baltic States. If it had been successful, if Petrograd had been taken, these peace negotiations would have become impossible, and, what is far more serious, peace with a Soviet Republic generally would have become impossible, and the position would have been successfully reached which would have made it impossible, even for a Liberal or a Labor Government in England to end the war in Eastern Europe. This may or may not have entered into the considerations of those who planned the attack. It is more probable that most of them assumed the indefinite continuance of the war as a matter of course, and concerned themselves merely with other quite definite objects which they believed could be obtained by success.

It was believed, for example, that as soon as the troops of the Whites threatened the city, the population of Petrograd would rise to help them,

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

and that Yudenvitch would enter Petrograd as a savior, distributing bread to a starving crowd who would flock eagerly into his army for the further march to Moscow. It was also assumed that the fall of Petrograd would cause such a concussion in Moscow that the whole Soviet system would speedily crumble to nothing and be incapable of defending itself against the advance of Denikin from the south.

During the whole crisis of the attack on Petrograd, from the capture of Gatchina by the Whites to its final recapture by the Reds, I was inside Soviet Russia, and observing the effect of the daily bulletins (at one time extremely pessimistic) in town and village, on the front and in Moscow itself. Remembering the discontent I had noticed when I was in Russia earlier in the year, I was myself more than half inclined to credit these assumptions. I can now state with absolute certainty that these assumptions were radically wrong, and based, like the long series of similar false assumptions that have characterized the last two years of Europe's road to ruin, on a fundamental misunderstanding of the psychology of the people in revolution.

The Attack as Seen from Both Sides.

Let me briefly recapitulate what happened on the White side of the struggle. Yudenvitch, with his Russian Corps considerably swelled by bread – seeking, hungry deserters, was carried to the very gates of Petrograd by the prestige Of the British Tank Corps. He was saved from annihilation on arrival there by the energy and gallantry of his Estonian allies, who, with no ends of their own to gain, and a deep-seated distrust of the kind of Russia that Yudenvitch represents, nonetheless through themselves furiously into the fighting, prevented the crushing of Yudenvitch's exposed flank, saved him from encirclement, and made it possible for him to withdraw the remnants of his force behind the defensive lines of the Estonian frontier. With this came and improve forms of man – telling equipment, the Whites were able to kill many other Russians, where bodies an American eyewitness tells me, they left unburied to be eaten by the famished dogs. That is the utmost they achieved, besides, of course carrying the desolation and ruin of war over a considerable area of the country. Put that to their credit. On the other

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

side of the account must be set their final loss of the little prestige they enjoyed in the Baltic, and the equipping of the Reds with a mass of material with which the Whites had been benevolently supplied by people whose wishes fathered an extraordinary over – estimate of their political or fighting value.

Now let me tell you what happened as seen from the side of the Reds. Here also was a fundamental misunderstanding of position. The Reds had been lulled by the talk of peace negotiations at Dorpat, and excusably so by the final naming of a date for these negotiations (the 25th October), into a belief that the war on the northwestern front was over and that no more serious fighting was to be expected. In this they were either extraordinarily stupid or extraordinarily badly informed, for everyone in the Baltic knew of the arrival of the British tanks. The fact it had been published in the newspapers, and even enthusiastic revolutionaries should have known that England does not send out tanks merely to take part in peace celebrations. However that may be, it is a fact that the first onslaught of the Whites was entirely unexpected, that the appearance of the tanks caused an immediate panic, which spread quickly to parts of the front where there were no tanks at all, and whole regiments stampeded simply on hearing a rumor that tanks had been seen in the neighborhood. Within a few days of the beginning of the attack the northwestern front had practically ceased to exist as a coordinate whole. The Estonians who have had small faith in Yudenitch army, were frankly amazed, and there was some excuse for the pro–White correspondents who, in order to be first with the news, began to send out rumors of the capture of Petrograd.

A Revolutionary War.

If the struggle had been a merely military struggle, an episode in an ordinary war, there can be no doubt that the city would have been taken. But this is not an ordinary war, but a revolutionary war in which there are a number of strange, incalculable factors that do not enter into the consideration of the ordinary military man. However the Petrograd workmen might grumble against the discipline imposed by the Bolsheviks, they were in no way anxious for the sterner discipline that

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

would be brought by any counterrevolution. Discontent against the existing system vanished away as the army of the Whites grew nearer, and by the time Yudenvitch reach the outer defenses of Petrograd he was faced no longer by a disintegrated city, but by a hostile city – an entirely different proposition. Men and women also poured out to strengthen the defenders. Children were in the streets beating tin boxes and waving red flags, a sure index to the feeling of the town. All work other than that absolutely necessary was laid aside. It was resolved that even if the outer defenses should be pierced the town should be defended street by street. Trotsky together with several other military leaders was for a moment almost in favor of abandoning the other defenses and letting Yudenvitch force in the city, confident that it would there be annihilated by the population. He quoted military strategists: “The object is not to gain or to hold territory but to destroy the enemy,” and urged that no sentimental considerations should prevail against what might be the surest plan of finishing with Yudenvitch once and for all. But Petrograd had no mind to be a battlefield if it could help it, and the defense strengthen hour by hour, less by the addition of guns and by the addition of revolutionaries.

In the Executive Committee in Moscow, Kamenov, Commander – in – Chief, once an officer of the old Imperial General Staff, describing the turning point of the struggle attributed the improvement to the Red Army outside Petrograd to the number of Communist who had voluntarily poured into it from the city (a significant statement from an officer who two years ago must have attributed the weakening of the old army to precisely the same cause to which he now attributed the strengthening of the new). Trotsky tried to lessen the prestige of the tanks by issuing special orders of the day explaining the tanks were merely tin boxes full of machine guns, and not monsters capable of flying, swimming, and miracles of all kinds. Yudenvitch was stopped. The counter – flood of desertion (the ebbs and flow of desertion is one of the main factors of revolutionary warfare) began, and in a few days the question was no more one of triumphal entry into Petrograd but of preventing a spectacular disaster.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Moscow Unperturbed.

That is what happened; but it must not be imagined that away back in the country, in Moscow, in Rejitsa, in the villages along the Western front, the story seemed like that. There few foresaw this end to it. Hungry folk assumed the worst, and there were two days in Moscow itself where the population believed that the newspapers were letting them down gently and that Petrograd had already fallen. During those two days I was there, and that is why I can say with such certainty that the assumption that the taking of Petrograd would have had an immediate repercussion in Moscow was mistaken. Too many towns have been lost and won and lost again in the civil war for the loss or capture of any town, even of Petrograd, to have the significance it would have had two years ago.

The comments I heard in the markets and elsewhere were of the least emotional character. An old woman remarked sagely that Petrograd took a lot of food, and never said anything to Moscow. Someone else said it would mean the war would last longer, because it would have to be taken again. I never heard a single word suggesting that because Petrograd had been taken there would be some sudden change of Moscow. I actually put the question straight out to many various simple folk, soldiers, peasants, peddling Jews, innkeepers, as to whether the system was firmer established than formally or whether it was weakening. One of all laughed at the idea that there would be any change. Yet one and all were prepared to believe that Petrograd had fallen. The supposition that that event had taken place made no difference whatever to their estimate of the solidity of the internal position.

The result of the attack may be summed as follows, omitting the slaughter: – (1) Postponement of peace negotiations between the Baltic States and Russia for one month and some days; (2) stirring the revolutionary embers of Petrograd once more into flame; (3) diversion of the discontent against the Bolsheviks into the channel of hostility to the invading force; (4) straining the excellent moral of the Estonian army by making it fight for interests which it could not identify with his own; (5)

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

reducing the territory of the Northwest Government to the room in which it deliberates; (6) putting an end to the existence of Yudenvitch army as an independent fighting force.

MG. February 2, 1920.

Yudenvitch's Arrest And Release.

Allied Intervention.

Army Pay in Uncovered Paper.

Reval, Saturday.

General Yudenvitch, who was arrested on the 28th, has been released at the request of the English and French Missions.

An incomplete and garbled version of the arrest has appeared in the Estonian and Russian press. The "Svoboda Rossii," lately a Yudenvitch organ, prints an account saying that Yudenvitch was arrested at the orders of the Procurator of the North-western army. Gossip attributes the arrest to a personal feud between General Balakhovitch and Yudenvitch but adds that the Estonian Ministry of Finance protested against the visa which had been given to Yudenvitch and other generals to leave the country.

The political representative of the North-western Government in Estonia interviewed by the "Svoboda Rossii," attributes the miserable situation of the remnants of the army to the fact that Yudenvitch had hitherto not covered in pounds sterling the enormous quantities of paper money issued on the front. "The North-west Government, as long ago as December 5, told General Yudenvitch that it was necessary immediately to do this, and General Yudenvitch's representative in the Council of Ministers, General Kondarevsky, fully agreed with the opinion of the Council."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

It is needless to point out that there is great bitterness among people paid in Yudenvitch money, and frequent complaints in the Russian press that English money remained in the hands of the generals. After the arrest, in the early hours of the 28th, Yudenvitch was sent off under guard in a special wagon, apparently to Ostate, where other Russian officers are under arrest, but the train was stopped and Yudenvitch released at the request, as stated, of the Allied Missions.

MG. February 4, 1920 #1

The Peace Of Dorpat.

Reval, Monday.

Peace between Estonia and Soviet Russia was promised last Tuesday, but, as usual, at the last minute disagreements postponed the final signing, which took place at Dorpat at one o'clock this morning. I was present at the final ceremony. The hall was specially lit with arc – lamps and other powerful lamps, so that the delegates sat blinking while a cinematograph operator turned the handle of his machine and half-a-dozen photographers walked round and round the room amidst the perpetual clicking of cameras. Mr. Birk, the Estonian Foreign Minister, who was not a member of the Delegation, sat away from the table slightly behind Mr. Poska, the, Prime Minister.

There was absolute silence when Mr. Poska put the final question to the Conference, saying that the Estonians were ready to sign, and asking if the Russians were prepared. Mr. Joffe quietly agreed. There were two copies of the treaty, which pointed out the relation between this peace and the Peace of Versailles, which, in spite of all rejoicings, will not mean peace in the world unless this unpretentious peace – making in Dorpat, a little university town at the other end of Europe, leads to a similar solution of the Russian problem by all other States concerned

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG February 4, 1920 #2.

Estonian – Soviet Terms.

Estonian Neutrality To Be Defended

Reval, Monday.

The peace treaty which has been concluded after prolonged negotiations between Soviet Russia and Estonia unreservedly recognizes the independence of the latter country. Soviet Russia renounces forever all rights of sovereignty over Estonia, which will henceforth have no obligations towards Russia. In the event of the neutrality of Estonia being internationally recognized Soviet Russia will be bound to take part in upholding Estonian neutrality.

Both parties renounce their claims for compensation for war expenditures. Prisoners of war are shortly to be repatriated by both parties. Russia is to pay Estonia 15 million rubles in gold. Furthermore, no Customs or transit charges will be fixed for goods passing through the territory of either party.

Estonia will receive a concession for the construction of a railway between Moscow and the Estonian frontier, as well as permission to purchase 1 million dessiatines (about 2,500,000 acres) of woodland, while Soviet Russia will be accorded the right of deriving electric power from the rapids on the Narova River.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. February 4, 1920. #3.

The Birth Of A New Spirit In Russia.

How The Revolution And The Red Army Have Become Nationalized.

Two Red Generals Who Were Executed By The Whites.

Reval, January 20.

When the Revolution was in its first youth the only music to which people marched in the streets of Petrograd and Moscow was the revolutionary music of the "Internationale," the "Marseillaise." "You fell as victims," and the like. Then the "Marseillaise" fell out of favor on account of its association with the French, who showed themselves particularly hostile to the Revolution. The others, of course, vigorously survive. When I was last in Moscow, every night I used to hear a father in the next room walking up and down using the "Internationale" to sing his baby to sleep and all public festivals and meetings ended with that song, if they did not begin with it. But gradually as the Red Guard has turned into the Red Army a number of new tunes that are very old have come to take their places in the revolutionary repertoire. In Moscow today the troops march off parade to the same old Russian soldiers song that I used to hear on the southwest front and by Baranovitchy, and on the frozen roads by Divnsk and Riga when the old Russian Imperial Army was doing its share in the wearing down of Germany. The same tunes that accompanied Brusilov's advance in 1916 now swing the feet of soldiers of the Red Army against the troops supported by foreign money on every one of her frontiers. At reviews of the Red Army the well-known parade words of the old Imperial Guards regiments is heard at least as often as the "Internationale".

And this is entirely characteristic of the natural normal development of the Revolution. There may have been a time when an attack on Soviet Russia would have been an attack on the Bolsheviks alone. It is possible that there was such a moment, though I do not think so. No honest observer could think now that in attacking Soviet Russia the Allies or those Russian émigrés who have called for foreign help are attacking

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

any single political party. With every day that passes the thing attacked is becoming more and more identical with the nation.

The New Russian National Spirit.

Up to and even during the Great War there was no Russian national spirit comparable in its intensity with our own or with the French. The Russians fought in the war, and fought well, but the peasant soldiers had only the foggiest notion of what it was all about, and the intelligentsia had always a curious aloofness in considering the struggle and its probable results. Some of them, particularly on the extreme Right, were convinced that Russia was fighting on the wrong side. This attitude of aloofness persists among those who have deserted the Revolution and are fighting against it on the fringes of Russia and in the lobbies of the European capitals. They are more or less indifferent as to the source from which they get their help. It does not occur to them as strange that they, dining comfortably abroad, should clamor for the continued blockade of their own country. They agitate in Berlin as in London, and with better hopes. They know that if they do succeed in beating their own country that will find readier help in keeping it down (both Koltchak and Denikin have failed to keep down the areas they temporarily subjected to themselves) from Germany plan from the Allies, if only because Germany is geographically there and German reaction more closely depends on Russian reaction for its own existence.

No: it is not on the fringes of Russia, or in the capitals of the West, where bargains are offered by Russians to every kind of foreigner in exchange for the means to kill Russians, where one asks help from Berlin, another from Paris, while a third begs for the help of the Japanese, that we shall find the embryo of the new Russian national spirit. Not there on the circumference, in that poisonous form of political intrigue, in the misty financial contortions of mushroom Governments – not there, but in the center we must look for that embryo and it is not hard to find.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Equality of Suffering.

Central Russia alone is not buying foreigners to fight Russians, but is fighting consciously against foreign interference on the whole of its circumference. It can have new “orientation” towards any saviors, English or German, for all alike are its enemies. There and here only is Russia, as Russia, fighting for Russia, and it is to Moscow and not to the backwoods that we must look for the organizing force and for the spirit with which Russia will emerge from the hardships to which we are submitting her, as we temper a blade by submitting it to extremes of heat and cold. This enormous political advantage is perfectly realized by the Bolsheviks though they are perhaps less conscious of the fact, patent to all independent observers, that they are themselves being transformed into internationalists. The Bolshevik Stalin, and intimate friend of Lenin, thus explains their victories over Koltchak and Denikin: “The victory of Denikin or Koltchak Would mean the loss of Russia’s independence and the turning of Russia into a cow for English and French money interests. In this sense the Government of Denikin and Koltchak Is the most anti—popular, the most anti— national Government; in this case the Soviet Government is the only popular, the only national government (in the best meaning of that word)....”

(Pravda December 28, 1919.)

Then, again, the hardship caused by the continuance of the war and the blockade falls not on any political party alone but on the whole population, and naturally, with every day more and more of the population is drawn into the common struggle to end that hardship. This is not to be wondered at except by those who swallow the fairy story that a small majority of holograms and murderers have been able to keep up a successful fight all these long months against forces equipped far more efficiently than they. That fairy story does not fit the facts which are obvious to the world, and it is high time that it should be discarded. Take, for example, medicine and the care of the sick. Is it likely that the doctors and nurses of Russia, who well know that they obtain drugs for their patients only through the smugglers organized by the Soviet

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Government, should blame that Government instead of blaming the Allies and the White Russians for thus barbarously making the smuggling of medical matters necessary? Of course not. They well know that this Government does its best to help them. Many of them have said publicly that never before have they had such assistance from any Government. Few of them are Bolsheviks, but in the stress of national hardship the realization that there are given all the help they ask brings them into line in the effort to stem the diseases due to that hardship, and the gratitude of the doctor swallows up the opposition of the politician. Thus an active worker under the Commissariat of Health is the well - known Academician P. P. Lazarov, who while working in an X- Ray institute which he has organized is at the same time engaged in devising means for circumventing the scientific blockade imposed by the interventionists. Another well - known doctor, working in the Commissariat, N.G. Freiburg,, well-known for his works on social hygiene, and on old States Councillor under the Tsar, definitely refused the invitation of one of the anti—Bolshevik Governments, on the ground that under the Soviets he is being enabled to carry out the plans of a lifetime.

A National Rally.

As with medicine so with every other activity in the country. Specialist in industry, in agriculture, not carrying two cans about politics one way or the other, suffer from the blockade. It is to their personal interest that the Soviet Government should secure peace and a lifting of the blockade, and more and more of them, though for the most part not Bolsheviks, are doing their best to assist it. Russia is at stake, and they can do no less.

For the first time since 1914 there is in Russia a general concentration on the needs of the war comparable at all with the concentration of the English against the Germans. There are women police in the streets of Petrograd. In the Government offices women, wherever possible, take the place of men. Numbers of women have gone to the front to assist in any way possible in the defense of the country and the revolution. There is scarcely a branch of peaceful industry in the country not handicapped

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

by the absence of men and women. I shall describe in another article the voluntary overtime work with which Communist and great numbers of nonpolitical men and women try to help these handicapped factories and railways. A colossal effort of this kind produces the conditions in which national spirit is born. We are welding together the Bolsheviks and their erstwhile opponents.

These erstwhile opponents justify their support of the Government in all kinds of ingenious ways. I have heard, for example, Russians, of the old governing class, now willingly working under the Soviet system, put forward the theory that people abroad are entirely wrong in believing that a monarchist or a bourgeois reaction is inevitable in Russia and will be brought on by Denikin. They say, on the contrary that the discipline and strict order enforced by the Bolsheviks with increasing success constitute the reaction, and that when historians come to look back on these times they will date the period of reaction from November 7, 1917, the day of the Soviet Revolution. These Russians say that in a revolution the army grows weaker and weaker until reaction sets in, after which it grows stronger and stronger; and they point to the fact that Russia has a better army today than at any time under the regime of Lvov and Miliukov and Kerensky. These Russians say that their cousins abroad failed to recognize this fact only because they are so cut off from Russia, and get their information exclusively from the romantic accounts of other émigrés, who have to justify their emigration and harp on the events of two years ago as if they were the events of today. The true patriots, they say, do not deserve Russia because she is hungry and cold, and, living abroad in London and Paris, urge that war and blockade shall make their country still hungrier and colder. They say that the mainstream of Russian history flows through the Revolution and will entirely disregard the little backwaters and accidental eddies of Russian opinion which look for help for Russia from outside Russia itself. They ask with irony, does this handful of émigrés seriously imagine they will be allowed to ruin Russia for the sake of their own mistaken estimate of forces there? And how soon will they realize that, so far from serving Russia, they are on the high road to earning unlike the scorn of their countrymen and the content of foreigners?

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Bolshevism Russianised.

But, no matter of what may be the theories whereby they justify their action, the cardinal fact is that more and more of the old governing classes are throwing in their lot with the Revolution. More and more clearly it is being realized that Russia is at stake as well as the Revolution. The Revolution is being militarized by being compelled to fight. It is being nationalized in the same way. More and more clearly it is felt that whatever may be the international hopes of the revolutionary leaders it is a Russian revolution, a revolution for which Russia is paying in blood and tears, a revolution which is a natural, inevitable, possibly a glorious phase in the development of Russia, a revolution which Russia, starving and equipped with nothing but a new – found indomitable spirit, is defending against the whole world.

I have mentioned the old Russian war – songs sung in the streets. I could mention a dozen other symptoms of this half – conscious Russianisation of the revolution. They have nationalized most things in Russia. We are now witnessing the final nationalization of the revolution itself. In the beginning the revolutionary leaders, fresh from European exile, insisted on the international character of the revolution. Now more and more the language of the revolution insist on its Russianess. More and more the allusions, the quotations, the freely scattered proverb of the revolutionary orators are taken from Russian sources. Trotsky, the Jew, Lenin, the Russian noble man, Kalinin, the peasant Premier of the big Executive Committee which is the Russian parliament, all alike emphasize their Russianness in every speech they make. More than once I have heard Kalinin praised for this alone, that “he speaks to the peasants in their own language.” The designers of uniforms for the Red Army do not look to Germany or to England for their models, but have in mind the traditional Russian warriors of old – time. I have seen Bolshevik Political Commissars with high – pointed khaki helmets fronted with a great red star and short – belted leather coats in form exactly modeled on the helmets and armor of the Bogatyia, the Russian heroes of antiquity. Even the illustrated Calendar issued by the State Publishing

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

House, for all its manifold references to internationalism, is as Russian as the illustrations of Bilibin in its colored pictures and its decorated initials. The symbolic pictures of "War," of peasants at work, of the revolution, all are rich with figures that would not be out of place in the Art Theater presentation on "Boris Godunov " or "Czar Fedor Ivanovitch."

Czarist Officers Serve Lenin.

These, it may be said, are small things, possibly accidents. Maybe, but there are other indications of a more solid character. The Whites say that the Reds compel officers of the old regime to serve in their armies under threat of all matter of horrible penalties. The first obvious deduction from these allegations is that indeed officers of the old army are serving in the army of the revolution. Of course they are, and, for the most part, they are serving loyally. Here and there one will desert, believing that the Whites will win. But, for the most part, they do not desert, even in the darkest and seemingly most hopeless moment of the struggle, as when Denikin was at Orel and Yudenvitch at the gates of Petrograd. Two years ago their loyalty to the revolutionary army would have been unthinkable. Something has happened in the meantime, and that something is the birth of a new Russian army and the birth of a new Russian national spirit. During the last two years these officers have seen a new army created out of chaos and inspired by something that previous Russian armies have lacked. Few professional soldiers could stand by and watch that army forming in the direct moment of their countries difficulties without wanting to have a hand in it. Quite naturally the history of the French revolutionary army is repeating itself in Russia. From France also many good soldiers fled away and came back to fight their countrymen at Quiberon and elsewhere. But far more stayed with France for France's sake, were she revolutionary or reactionary and came to realize the value of the revolutionary idea, no doubt detesting to some of them, in the new inventory of munitions of war.

So it is in Russia. Kamenev, an old Czarist officer, now commander – in – chief, referred to the flooding of the front with Communists as the chief reason of the army's regeneration after the panic caused by the British

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

tanks. A hundred and twenty years ago, when Napoleon was busy planting his relations and friends on the thrones of Europe, he did not lay aside the idea of revolution which carried his soldiers from one victory to another. And with him young officers leapt swiftly to the top, A revolutionary army, a revolutionary period, offers chances to the soldier of genius such as he can never hope for in normal times. The career of Colonel Gettis, now commanding the western front, is in no way exceptional. A colonel. in the old army, he took part voluntarily in the organization of the new. When we took Archangel he was appointed to command the forces against us, which he speedily turned from a mob into an organized army, as our own soldiers have testified, being ready to attribute his work to the Germans. From the north he was sent to command the army fighting on the Voronezn sector against Denikin. Here, too, he was equally successful and became commander of the whole southern front. Hence he was moved to the western front, where the weaker, less disciplined armies were in need of the organization which he has shown himself capable of introducing. It was he who directed the operations that ended in the complete defeat of Yudenvitch.

Two Illustrations.

An ambitious soldier needs no compulsion to serve his country in an army which offers such speedy recognition. And “compulsion” will not explain the readiness of Nikolaev and Stankevitch to die rather than desert the army in which they had fought. General Nikolaev was executed by the Whites on the Petrograd front. The case of General Stankevitch is a still more striking illustration of the fact that patriotism and nationalism in Russia now stand shoulder to shoulder with the Revolution. I am told that earlier in the Revolution he was actually a member of an anti—revolutionary organization. He was an old general of the Imperial Army, then a commander in the Red Army. He was captured by Denikin, but refused to go over to the Whites. He was hanged, and it is alleged that a red star was branded on his breast. When the Red Army recovered Orel peasants who had witnessed the execution pointed out the grave, and told how when the executioner prepared to put the noose round the old man’s neck, General Stankevitch took it from him and said, “I have served in the Red Army, and if I am condemned to die I am well

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

able to adjust the loose myself.” He was 62 years old at the time of his death. His body was exhumed, and has recently been buried in the Red Square in Moscow with fullest honors as a hero of the Revolution. That solemn burial under the red flag of an old general of the Tsar is a very remarkable symbol of the changing attitude alike of the revolutionaries and of their one time opponents.

MG. February 6 1920.

**Peace – Making Without Wounds.
Russia’s Example With Estonia.
Lettland’s Late Request.**

Reval, Wednesday.

I have had an interview with Mr. Joffe, the Moscow peace delegate, who told me that Lettland had asked three days ago to be admitted to the peace negotiations, together with the Estonians. The Letts were too late for the conference at Dorpat, but place and time of negotiation with them will be settled immediately.

Regarding the Estonian peace, Mr. Joffe said: “I have tried throughout to make it clear that Russia actually wishes to live at peace with her neighbors and is genuinely ready to assist in the independence of small nations, even when not wholly approving their form of government. These nation will in the future naturally have the closest relations with Russia and it is important that from the start all feelings of hostility should disappear. Therefore, I willingly agreed to terms which place, Estonia on an extremely sound economic footing in the full belief that that the Estonian people will realize that Socialist Russia is their friend, not their enemy.”

Mr. Joffe said he was convinced that peace would have been possible on other terms, but he was anxious that the Estonians should not feel

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

that a hard bargain had been driven with them, but be really contented with the terms.

I asked whether the 15 millions dowry for the new Republic was to be taken as a precedent. Mr. Joffe replied: "No. A special clause in the treaty points this out. This was the price for Estonia in particular because she was the first border State that had the courage to make peace."

At a luncheon given by the Estonian delegation I sat next to Mr. Piip, who confirmed Mr. Joffe's statement that Lettland, too late, had decided to join the Dorpat negotiations. He thought Russian-Lettish peace was a question of the immediate future.

Mr. Piip, of course, takes another view than Mr. Joffe of Russian motives in endowing the new Republic, pointing out that Estonia had serious economic claims on Russia, etc. In a short speech he referred to the fact that from the beginning of the Paris negotiations Estonia had tried to urge a peaceful solution of the Russian problem as the only way of avoiding prolonged disquiet and greater catastrophe in Eastern Europe. He mentioned England's de facto recognition of Estonia, and referred to the way in which the English Liberal press had assisted "youthful Estonian diplomacy." He characterized the peace as a "Saturday settlement; at the end of the week both sides were ready to come to work again together." He also pointed out that this treaty contains no word of mutual hostility, but is actually a friendly, peace – loving settlement of all points in dispute.

MG February 6, 1920.

**The Russian Terms To Esthonia.
Exceptional Concessions.**

Reval, Wednesday.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The Russian–Esthonian Peace Treaty consists of 20 points, which may be summarized or described as follows: –

- 1. Ends the state of war.**
- 2. Recognition of the independence of Esthonia.**
- 3. Frontiers.**
- 4 Gives one years grace wherein non-Esthonians living in Esthonia can choose Russian citizenship, or vice versa, either State having the right to refuse such citizenship.**
- 5. Russia agrees to observe and share in the guarantees of Esthonian neutrality should that be internationally recognized.**
- 6. Russia and Esthonia mutually agreed to take the necessary steps to fall in with an international agreement for the neutralization of the Finnish Gulf if that should be recognized.**
- 7. With notes, contains military guarantees against either country being used as a base of military operations against the other. This, with the preceding points, was attached to the armistice agreement signed a month ago.**
- 8. Mutual agreement upon no indemnitees.**
- 9. War prisoners to be returned without delay.**
- 10. Conditions of amnesty for offenses by prisoners and interned persons.**
- 11. Russia resigns the right to property in warships, forts, harbor works, etc. which were in Esthonian territory or waters before the German occupation of February 24, 1918; “also ships, including warships, which came thither during German occupation or, finally, were captured during the succeeding war between Russia and Esthonia by the forces of Esthonia or by other forces and handed over to Esthonia.” The money claims of the Russian Treasury on Esthonian citizens pass to Esthonia. Esthonia agrees to make no demand on Russia arising from former appurtenances to the late Russian Empire**
- 12. Independently of the agreements established by article 11 –(1) Russia hands over to Esthonia 15 millions of rubles in gold, 8 millions within one month, the remaining seven within two months after the day of ratification.**
 - (2) Esthonia bears no responsibility for debt or any other kind of obligations of Russia, including such as rise from the issue of paper money, Treasury tokens, bills, etc., of the Russian Treasury, foreign or**

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

internal loans, guaranteed loans, various institutions, undertakings, etc., and all such pretensions of the creditors of Russia in so far as they touch Esthonia should be addressed exclusively to Russia.

(3) With regard to Russian paper money guaranteed by the Government and actually in Esthonia and similar obligations by enterprises and undertakings nationalized by the Russian Government, Esthonian citizens shall have the same treatment as shall be given to other foreign Powers and citizens. The archives of the library all of Dorpat University and other documents of historical and scientific interest for Esthonia shall be returned by Russia, similarly with securities, etc., evacuated into Russia during the war.

13. "Russia declares that the rights, privileges and advantages given by the present Peace Treaty to Esthonia and her citizens can in no case and under no conditions serve as a precedent in the event of the conclusion by Russia of peace treaties with other States that have arisen on the territory of the late Russian Empire. On the other hand, if in the conclusion of such treaties any of the above-mentioned States or their citizens receive special rights, privileges or advantages, these immediately without special agreement shall be extended in full to Esthonia and her citizens."

14. Arranges for commissions to deal with the making of a commercial treaty and economic questions generally, and the return of archives, securities, etc. the handing over of property deciding of questions concerning the interest of private citizens of both countries, and questions of property, companies, etc., affected by the new frontiers.

15. Diplomatic consular relations between Esthonia and Russian to be established at a date to be determined by agreement.

16. Contains three Notes concerning economic relations. The important points in the first Note are the negotiations for a commercial treaty begin as soon as possible after the ratification of peace, and the "goods brought through the territory of one of the parties to the other shall not be subject to transit taxes or Customs duties." Further, in the free harbors to be opened at Reval and other ports, Russia to receive places for unloading and loading, etc., in proportion to her traffic, the taxes, etc., for such places not to be higher than the taxes taken from Esthonian citizens with regard to the transit of goods.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The second Note deals with fishing water rights on Pskoff and Peipu Lakes, “those methods of fishing only to be allowed which do not exhaust the fishing ground.” No artificial inpouring or outpouring of water to be allowed which shall raise or lower the lakes by more than 1 foot.

The third Note gives Russia the first right to electric current from the waterfalls of the Narova River, payment to Esthoni to be decided by special agreement.

The fourth Note is of special interest: “Russia agrees to give Esthonia the first right to a concession for building, surveying, and exploration direct the shortest railway, normal gauge, single or double rail, connecting Moscow with points on the Esthonian – Russian frontiers, with the right to purchase before the expiration of the term, the period of the concession and all similar conditions of the concession to be determined by special agreement.

Russia also gives Esthonia the first right to a timber concession over an area of 1 million dessiatins in the territory of Pskoff and Petrograd over the Novgorod, Olonetz , and Archangel Governments, the conditions to be determined by special agreement.

17. Arranges for the establishment of lighthouses and pilots and mine sweeping by both parties.

18. Explains that the rights given by the treaty to Esthonian citizens apply also to district, urban, charitable, religious, and educational institutions and also legal persons, etc.

19. States that the Russian and Esthonian texts of the treaty are alike authentic.

20. States that the exchange of documents and ratifications takes place as soon as possible in Moscow. The signatories for Russia are M. Joffe and Gukovsky: for Esthonia M. Poska, Piip, Piuman, Selyama , and Soots.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. February 13, 1920.

Esthonia's Peace.

A Difficulty In Illicit Food Export.

Antidote To Bolshevism.

Reval, Wednesday.

The Esthonian Constituent Assembly has decided unanimously to proceed with the second reading of the bill for the ratification of the Peace Treaty with Russia. The first reading gave an opportunity to the leaders of all parties to express their views. The Premier, M. Poska, traced the growth in Esthonia of the idea of peace after Koltchak, through Denikin, had declared the Esthonians to be traitors, showing what they could expect from reactionary Russia: while Soviet Russia, on the other hand, offered recognition, etc.

The Social Democrat Ast was alone in suggesting that the Esthonians could have got even better terms. The Social Revolutionary leader said he was in favor of peace a year ago, and regretted that it came so late. Every party expressed agreement with the peace policy of the Government. The third reading is expected on Friday.

The peace provisions come into force from the moment Moscow is informed by radio of the ratification, as Russia has already ratified. The exchange of documentary ratifications will take place about a week later; then the Esthonian Commission goes to Moscow.

A Temptations to Smugglers.

Today I had a long talk with Mr. Otto Birk, The Foreign Minister, who was much pleased by the Constituent Assembly debate. We talked less of the advantages and disadvantages of the peace. Prices here are rising, and show that the people are thinking of export to Russia, where prices are infinitely higher. Mr. Birk said: "Everything has a shadow on one side of it, and this is certainly the darkest side of the peace – if foodstuffs leave

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Esthonia for Russia; but we doubt if any considerable quantities will cross the frontier. The Government is taking every precaution. It is possible that there will be an electric wire fence along the frontier. In any case there will be cavalry patrols, and we are naturally retaining for some time a considerable army on the front. Peipus Lake, which is frozen, is most difficult to guard, as the peasants from long practice know the ice roads in the dark.

“There will be the strictest punishments for contrabandists and food to speculators of all kinds. We shall have the nation behind us if we deal severely with men who for the sake of gain are prepared to starve Esthonia. There will be railway examinations and house searches. We shall make it impossible to move quantities of foodstuffs, and hoarding will be punished, beside confiscation of the stores. Smugglers will have no easy time.”

Forestalling Revolution.

I referred to a reported alleged speech by Lenin in Moscow promising eventually a better peace with eventual Soviet Esthonia and saying the present was a Kerensky Government and bound to be replaced by a Soviet Government. Mr. Birk doubted the authenticity of the speech, on the ground that the suggestion in it was that the peace was unfair, whereas he believed it had been satisfactory to both sides. “In any case Lenin is mistaken in thinking ours is a Kerensky Government. The Kerensky Government postponed radical action, thereby helping the extremists. We by a radical policy destroy the grounds for revolutionary radicalism. The people accuse us of being Bolsheviki. For that very reason we do not fear Bolshevism here.”

I asked whether if Poland insisted on attacking Russia, Poland would be able to draw the smaller northern nations again into the struggle. Mr. Birk thought not. He believes a Lettish Constituent Assembly would be considerably farther to the Left than the present Lett Government, and even the present Government is disposed to follow the Esthonian example.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. February 26, 1920.

**Estonian Freedom.
Celebration At Reval.**

Reval, Monday.

Today is a great Estonian holiday, the second anniversary of the declaration of independence. Two years ago, in a small red building in the center of the town, the Estonians proclaimed their independence. Two days later the Germans occupied Reval and liquidated the temporary Government.

But, independence once proclaimed, after 700 years subjection, the Estonians resisted all pressure brought to bear by the Germans and those who welcomed them. On the other hand they identified the Communists with Russia. The Estonian reactionaries identified themselves with Germany.

The succeeding two years showed the national feeling of Estonia as the main motive of the struggle against two social extremes, ending with the expulsion of the defeated Landswehr and a satisfactory and honorable peace with Russia.

Today the whole town is on holiday. In the great square the huge bronze statue of Peter the Great, ironically surrounded with Estonian flags, look down on a parade of the troops of the little nation, which for 200 years has made a part of the Russian Empire. The trees round the square are thick with small boys waving fur caps and looking over the heads of the soldiers at the impassive Peter.

Two years ago the Estonians had neither troops nor arms, but are now conscious of having achieved their end. The infantry, lancers, fire brigades, schoolboy battalions, the artillery, and three toy tanks

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

marched twice round the little town through streets so packed with onlookers that there was scarcely room for the troops to pass MG. March 8, 1920.

Enemies Of Peace In Eastern Europe.

Attempt To Discredit Estonia.

The Border State Crisis.

Reval, Saturday.

Anti-Bolshevik propaganda during the last two years has been mostly written or inspired by foreigners who are anxious to distract British attention *from* the much more serious and more efficient propaganda which they themselves have been conducting with the object of misleading Allied policy in the East. The favourite method of these people has been to describe as Bolshevik anyone who preferred the interests of his own country to those of a handful of Russian emigres. The same method is now being applied on a larger scale not to persons but to nations who prefer their own interests to those foreigners.

The Estonian Democratic Republic made peace with the Russian Socialist Republic, thereby taking the first *step* towards peace in Eastern Europe. This was obviously not to the interest of the emigres, whose livelihood goes if war discontinues. Therefore, from various centers. Such as Helsingfors, Stockholm and Warsaw, violent propaganda lies have been launched against the plucky little country.

It is alleged that a secret agreement of an unworthy character has been concluded between the Bolsheviks and the Estonians It is false. It is alleged that the Estonian Government turned Bolshevik, and General Laidoner resigned or lied in disgust. It is false. It is alleged that there have been riotous demonstrations against the Government. It is false. The only demonstrations were orderly rejoicings on the anniversary of the declaration of Estonian independence.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Much more of the same *sort* is invented with *the* definite and sinister end, first, *of* revenge on Estonia; secondly, to prevent other bonier States, principally Poland, *from* following English advice and Estonian example. There is urgent need to nail these lies to the counter and defeat the unscrupulous attempt to clear the way *for* another summer campaign in Eastern Europe.

Estonia to-day is less likely to turn Communist than ever before, precisely because with the cessation of war has passed' the most fruitful of all causes of discontent. The best way of spreading revolution in Eastern Europe will be to induce Poland or any other country to continue fighting, thereby postponing the resumption of normal trade and creating new economic sores instead of healing those already in existence.

MG. March 13, 1920.

**Into Bolshevik Russia. I
The Estonian Lettish Front
"Why Are We Still At War?"**

At 5:30 one morning I left the regimental staff at Maliup in an aged black chariot requisitioned from a neighboring estate. At the end of 15 versts of fair road we came to Seydenitz, from which point I had hoped to get across the front, but the battalion commander there told me that fighting had already begun on his section and that the best I could do would be to go to Balovsk and go across in the marsh country, where the lines were more or less stable. So I drove another 30 versts or so to Balovsk on a back road through almost unending forest. My driver was very unwilling, fearing that we should be attacked by the outlaws who, he said had grown very bold and inconsiderable parties attacked farms and even military pickets for the sake of their stores.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The road was so bad that it was not until dusk that we drove over the wooden bridge that crosses the narrows of a lake and leads to the town, or as we in England should call it the village. The country house and its dependent buildings cover at least as much ground as the town itself. The big house had been turned into a barrack. The space in front of it was churned mud and two or three field kitchens stood outside the door.

In one of the smaller buildings I found a party of officers, who were very hospitable and insisted on my joining them in revelry until far into the night. They made me a bed of a sofa and chair, and it was decided that next morning I should accompany a convoy going to a point on the front where it might be possible to arrange parliamentaries. Unfortunately the others had no such urgent reasons as I have for hiring, and, after our songs and speech – making of the night, everybody except myself overslept, so that instead of starting at 5:30 it was not until eight that we left Belovsk. We might have got away before, but I was traveling with Estonians, the Lettish population were very unwilling to help them in the matter of carts, and the sleepy young officer who stamped about the village in the dawn had difficulties in collecting his caravan.

The Track Through the Forest.

Finally, however, we got away in three small springless wooden four – wheeled carts, with a bundle of a hay in each. Besides the drivers two of whom were soldiers and drove with the carbines between their knees, there were four infantrymen besides the officer and myself. For some way out of Balovsk the road was firm and good, through open country, but suddenly it worsened as it passed into the forest and soon became little more than an abominable track. There were deep holes filled with water, logs, wood rotting where they lay, fir branches, and even stumps of old felled trees remaining on the track itself, to be skirted and grazed by the rough little carts or, if a wheel happen to hit one full, to bring it to do a dead stop. At the worst parts we walked, mile after mile jumping from one dry spot to another at the side of the track, which was knee-deep in black mud when it was not underwater. There was snow in the air though none had fallen. It was cold and raw, and the men were nervous, partly because of the so– called Red outlaws, partly because

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

they were moving in territory containing a population which was rather Lettish than Estonian and steadily hostile to themselves. Once only during the day did we meet any other travelers, and they were a small group of horsemen, partisans, riding towards Balovsky, their guns on their backs. It was such traveling as must have been in England in 1644.

We talked very little on the journey, being hungry, cold, and so disposed to silence. The soldier driving my cart, after we had driven about 5 versts, made as though to ask me a question, but thought better of it. He replied in monosyllables to my inquiries about this or that in the forest. After another five versts he again seemed to be on the point of the question, but again refrained. It was not until we were nearly at our journey's end that he made up his mind and brought his question plump out, asking it, and turning his head to watch my face narrowly to see the effect of asking it. "Why is it that we are still at war?" I thought for a moment and replied, "I do not know." His officers had asked the same question the night before, and I was to hear many times again before I reached Moscow.

A Stolen Lunch.

Soon after that, in a great clearing in the forest, we passed a house of grey, unpainted wood. On either side, about 100 yards distant, the forest trees rose like a dense hedge. Just as we passed the house my soldier woke for the first time to lively active interest. He jumped from the cart, ran to a penthouse at the side, grabbed a huge armful of dried pea stocks with the leaves and pods, crammed them into the cart between my legs, and vaulted to his place again beside me. An old woman, who must have been privately watching us, though we had not seen her, ran out into the open from the doorway of the house and stood there cursing, lifting her clenched fists above her head and dropping them again as if she were pulling down handfuls of fire from heaven. He shrugged his shoulders. I thought he had taken the stuff as fodder for his horse, but he presently took a pod and split it and dropped the dried peas into his mouth. "Very tasty," he said, and, following his example, I too found some satisfaction in chewing them, though I had to spit out half mine while he swallowed all his.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

We drove another half hour or so chewing peas. The forest was growing thinner. We could hear occasional rifle fire. Presently the officer called back that the carts had better move with greater intervals between them so as not to attract the attention of the enemy. The forest now suddenly opened out on either side of us, and the track wound this way and that over strips of soaking marshland among patches of small, stunted trees. The wheels sank axle deep wet, black sand, or dropped into water holes, which in a few cases had been roughly filled with fir branches. Once or twice we nearly upset. My soldier got down, and I did the same, and left him to flounder with the horse and cart, seeing that I could not help him. I picked my way from clump to clump of sodden grass, slipping to the knees in mud, and only now and again getting the pleasure of a few yards of solid ground. The carts were not so much moving forward as being pulled out of one hole after another. They were soon half a mile behind us, visible now and then. We trudged on, each man by himself, the soldiers with their coats belted up, their rifles slung on their backs, making their way grimly through the mud, the officer some little way ahead singing quietly to himself, and I whistling "John Peel," and thankful to know that we had got so far.

MG. March 15, 1920.

Into Bolshevik Russia II.

Among The Lettish Partisans.

A pale sun shone down out of a white sky on the incredibly desolate marsh. Before us stretched what seemed to be a line of forest, but proved when we came near to be no more than stunted trees and weak undergrowth, for the most part standing in water. At the edge of this woody swamp, which screened the actual front, a man was walking to meet us alone. Our officer hurried forward to meet him. A solid figure in a brown officers tunic with two George Crosses for bravery, both won in the ranks, he was commander of Lettish irregulars, or partisans, with

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

perhaps 50 men under him, with whom he was holding the eastern side of the marshes. A very clean, matter – of – fact, cheerful unthinking, noncommissioned officer of the old school, without an idea in his head, who regarded the revolution as a kind of spoilt – sport that made men worry with their brains instead of doing natural things like marrying, or killing Germans, or going after capercailzies with a shotgun or pipe with a lantern and spear.

He was very doubtful of the success of my enterprise, but said he would do his best to make it easy. He and I set off together at a great pace, soon leaving the others behind. The carts did not come much farther, as we were already within sight of the enemy, who held positions on the low rise of ground on the farther side of the swamp. "We are not on very good terms with them just now," he said," but come to the staff, and we'll see what can be done."

His staff proved to be a peasant's cottage of one big room, with a few children sleeping in a shallow place between the stove and the roof, an old-man who stuck his tangled head out of a bed in a corner to stare at us, three or four young women, and about a score of wild lads. Lads, I called them. I should have said "lads and old men." I did not see a man under forty or over twenty in the room, with the exception of their Commander. They were for the most part children of fifteen, sixteen, or seventeen, enjoying themselves mightily with guns in their hands and men to shoot, together with a sprinkling of old men. The Commander, himself just literate, no more, brought a moment's silence into the room, but was presently overwhelmed by information from all sides when he told of his ruffians what was afoot. Everybody began talking at once. Fortunately not all were Letts in the hut, and Russian was used as a common language. The first words I heard were a startling commentary on what I had just been told.

"That will be quite easy," said one of the lads; "we have some of the Reds coming over for tea to-night, and we can fix it up with them then."

"What," said the Commander, a little disconcerted; "have they been coming over already."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

"Nothing serious," "chimed in an old man in a corner, the others, who saw their officer's face, becoming suddenly silent." "Nothing serious. Some of the boys went with Ignatovsky to have a crack with them, and they gave them Mahorka (Russian tobacco) and sent them back, and now it's their turn to come here. We've been very careful to have no surprises."

The Commander smiled rather sheepishly, looking at me with a sort of hope that I had not understood.

"You see there is nothing but marsh here. They cannot attack us, and it's difficult for us to attack them. We shoot at each other every day, but, after all, that's rather dull after a time."

He turned again to the crowd. "Has Ignatevsky been here to-day ? "

"Yes, yes. He was here just now. He must be at the near farm now, unless he has already gone home."

The Letter of Introduction.

It appeared that Ignatovsky was an old peasant who lived in a farm on a strip of more or less well-drained land in the marsh between the two fronts. On his visits to this side he was accustomed to leave his horse and cart at another small farm that lay a 100 yards away, sheltered by a low rise of ground.

"Will anyone take a letter to him?"

An old man immediately volunteered, a scrap of paper was torn out of the back of an account – book, I provided a pencil, and, with tremendous pencil-sucking and flourishes, the Commander set about writing a formal letter to the Reds.

The letter was addressed to the Commander of the Red Company holding the post by the windmill. It described me, and said that I had all

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

necessary documents. It proposed that three Reds should advance to a bridge in the middle of the neutral ground between the fronts, and that three Whites should accompany me to the same spot, nobody to carry arms. Everything was in due form, and the Commander, with a final twirl of his pencil, his elbows spreading across the wooden table, signed himself in full, "Commander of such and such a company, in such and such a regiment of Lettish partisans.

"Hi, hi," I said, "that won't do at all. You are giving away too much. They would never tell you what regiment they have on the other side."

"No," said the Commander, horrified for a moment, and with a great care tore off the bottom half of the paper. "It's a good thing you thought of that. It's better to have things as they should be," he said, "though of course they could easily find out from Ignatovsky, or when they come over to talk with my lot." He then folded up the paper, very small, like a love – letter, and called upon the old man who had offered to take it to the near farm.

But the old man had hidden himself in a group in the corner of the room. He came out bashfully like a tall, overgrown school – girl, playing with the muzzle of his rifle.

"Won't someone go with me?" He asked

"You are much more likely to be shot at if there are two of you. You just slip along to the farm and nothing will happen."

The old man took the note, dropped it between his shirt and his skin for safekeeping, and set off. The low room grew thicker and thicker with tobacco smoke. There were not two men or boys in it dressed alike. The Commander was the only person with any pretense at a uniform. Short coats, long coats, high boots, straw slippers, and legs bound up with rags, cartridges slung on them in home – made bandoliers, they were a wild – looking crew, and I was surprised at the good order in which, when the time came for the relieving of a post somewhere out there in the swamp, ten of them formed into line, turned suddenly into something like

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

soldiers, and filed out. (I should, perhaps, say here that except for these irregulars all the soldiers I saw on this side of the front wore English uniforms, or something like them.) There was no sign of tea, nor have anything to eat, and I have had nothing all day, except the dried peas. I cut up some twist tobacco, and gave some to the Commander, who smoked it with a wry face, taking his pipe in and out of his mouth as if it had been a cigarette, while he talked encouragingly of Ignatovsky, and of how he regularly-carried news from one side to the other. "They sent me a message telling me I was a slave of foreign capital and a traitor to the working class. I replied that they were a gang of thieves, and that I would find enough trees in the marsh to hang them on. But that's when we send letters. To meet them they are not bad fellows. But I don't know how they will treat you. We will all follow some way off with guns, and if there is any funny play"

I tried to point out that "funny play" was more than likely if the Reds saw that the terms of the agreement were being broken, and that a crowd of folk with rifles were creeping towards them. But at that moment the old man returned, smiling like a child who has successfully carried out an errand.

"The letter has been delivered," he said. "Ignatovsky sent it to the Reds at once by one of the women."

"And the answer?"

"There is no answer. How could there be an answer? I gave the letter to Ignatovsky. who is at the near farm. He sent it on. I came back. What answer could there be?"

Dispensing with Parliamentaries.

At that there was a general hubbub. The Letts were very unwilling to set out in broad daylight with me across the marsh by the open road, carrying luggage, without having had any promise from the other side that they would not be shot at. The old man was very unwilling to go back even to the near farm. I could hardly blame them, and as it was

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

already three o'clock and I had to get across somehow, before dark, I proposed to manage without the tiresome ceremony of parliamentaries if they for their part would get me and my luggage as far as the near farm, which was close by. I learnt from the old man that Ignatovsky had a cart there. I proposed to get Ignatovsky, on whom, as the general go-between I felt sure the Reds would not shoot, to transport me the greater part of the way to his farm in No Man's Land, there to make my own arrangements.

The Lett commander -was relieved, but still a little uneasy.

"But how," he asked, "shall I get a report as to the way the Reds receive you, so that I can report to the Esthonians, as I am asked to do?

"I can send a note back by Ignatovsky."

"And, of course, if the Reds start shooting, we shall hear them," said one of the lads in a very cheerful voice.

I saw Ignatovsky just now at the near farm. He'll probably be there still," said the old man who had acted as messenger.

That settled it. In a few minutes, after a general handshaking and wishing of good luck, we all crowded out of the hut. A dozen of the brigand like irregulars went off by a circuitous route to a place in the marsh from which they could see the windmill, and the road to it by which I should have to walk. "The shooting won't be only on one side, if there is any," they said pleasantly as they went off, like a procession of Robinson Crusoes, with their leather coats, frieze coats, sheepskin coats, their wildly assorted footgear, their rifles slung across their backs. The Lettish commander, more than a little worried at the discrepancy between his orders and their execution, which was certainly very unlike a formal arrangement of parliamentaries and the solemn banding over of a distinguished guest, as had been erroneously described, went on with me to the near farm, two soldiers a little way behind us carrying my typewriter and bags.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Presently there was a rattle of shooting away to the right.

“Hang those boys,” said the Lett. “They ought to keep quiet at least while we get into the hollow. Don’t walk too close together. Step out lively.”

We followed a rough track from the hut over a low mound. The track was really a continuation of the road along which our carts had floundered all day, but for five or six months it had been cut off short by the front and had ended at the hut we had just left. It was now scarcely distinguishable from the surrounding land, except for the rare marks of wheels, the wheels of Ignatovsky’s cart on the smuggling expeditions which, obviously, were winked at by both sides, ten minutes walking brought us into a slight hollow, and here, in the yard of a small farm, we found Ignatovsky himself harnessing a lean brown horse into just such a four – wheeled spring less cart as that in which I have bumped all day.

Ignatovsky was like the dwarf in the Russian fairy story of the “Three Men of Power.” the dwarf who was caught by the youngest of the three brothers who fixed his long beard in the cleft of a split log. He was very small, very square, with a spindly legs in best slippers and rags, with long hair and immensely long, untrimmed graybeard.

He agreed at once to the proposition of the Lett that he should take me and my luggage to his farm in the middle of No Man’s Land, and, eventually, to the Red lines.

“And mind you report to me how the Reds receive him, for I have to send back a report on that subject.” said the Lett who was trying to persuade himself that he was accurately obeying orders, and that all was falling out as neatly and orderly as it had been planned in headquarters.

Ignatovsky put a bundle of straw in the cart for us to sit on. We piled on my luggage. I climbed up on one side. He climbed up on the other.

“You are sure I can do no more for you?” said the Lett.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

“Quite sure,” said I. “Good luck to you and many thanks.”

“Good luck.”

And the little old man, Ignatovsky looking sideways at me, examining one after the other my hat, coat, pipe, gloves, boots, leggings, and baggage, dodged the corner of the barn with a rear wheel, and drove out of the yard and out on the track over the swamp that led to the Red front trenches.

MG. March 16, 1920. #1.

Into Bolshevik Russia.-III.

The Farm In No Man’s Land.

During the next hour I was to get a view of the war quite unlike any that could be obtained from within the lines of either Reds or Whites. Ignatovsky and his family, by geographical accident, belonged neither to one side nor to the other. Living up there, the farm in the middle of the marshes, with Reds on one side of them and Whites the other, the whole affair was a kind of human thunderstorm. Their task was to shelter from it the best they could, profit by it where possible, and hope for fine weather.

Ignatovsky after examining me all over with little quick glances while he steered the cart, along the track, clearly decided that I was a White, and to be humored accordingly.

“This ditch,” he said at last, pointing to the deep drain, the edge of which was being continually shaved by our wheels, “this ditch is a good ditch, but out of repair. It was made by the owner of the estate... at least he told us to make it, and we made it. He has gone away, and now the Reds want to be masters in his place, and they do not know how to be masters.”

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

“How do the Reds treat you?” I asked.

He hesitated a moment, looking at me narrowly. “I have nothing against them,” he said diplomatically.

“And the Whites?”

I have nothing against them either. Some of my sons are on each side. No, I have nothing against either if only they would stop fighting. No one knows what they are fighting about, and it seems to me, who have considered the matter deeply, that the end of the world is coming very soon. You see, first there was the Russians against the Turks, then the Russians against the Japanese, then against the Germans, and now brother against brother, while the ditches fall into disrepair. Good ditches, too; and in another year all that labor will be wasted. Yes, it came to me that it means the end of the world.”

“How soon?”

“Who can say? Perhaps before Christmas, perhaps after; but this cannot go on forever. Already five months when I work in the field I hear bullets, sometimes from one side, sometimes from the other, and I ask myself which of my sons is sending love messages to his old father. Eh. Get up there. Hold tight. Aah!” One of our rear wheels slipped over the edge of the ditch, and there was a moment when, skidding along the edge, it seemed to me as if the cart might follow.

“Are you a Russian?” I asked

“No,” he replied, “I am a Roman Catholic.” If he had been asked what nationality he belonged to he would’ve replied. “From hereabouts.” A Russian for him meant a member of the Orthodox Greek Church.

“Where are the Red lines?”

“Over there along the edge of the rising ground, and along the edge of the forest. Look, there is someone moving.”

“Then they can see us?”

“Of course they can. Now, if it were dusk, and they could not see so clearly, it might be dangerous. But they know me. They know old

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Ignatovsky, and would never shoot at him. They'll be wondering what I've got in the cart."

Presently the road rose a little, turning to the right, and then dropping into a shallow dip in the middle of which is a solid, log built farmhouse with outhouses and a bit of garden, in which another old peasant was at work. Ignatovsky drove up between the farm and the outhouses, handed over the horse to the other old man who came out to meet him, and invited me to go into the house.

A Peasants Household.

The inside of the house was a single great room, the logs roughly trimmed on the inner surface, uncovered by paper or plastic. A few strings of dried mushrooms were hanging from the beams. The huge store had a large nesting – place at the back of it from which the tousled heads of two children inspected me, withdrawing into the darkness and peeping out again like desperately inquisitive mice inspecting a prowling cat. A woman with a blue handkerchief tied around her hair turned from raking the stove.

She asked me to sit down and regretted that they had no tea. I asked her if she minded my smoking, whereas both she and Ignatovsky laughed, and she explained that he smoked all day. I pulled out some plug tobacco and began to cut it up. Ignatovsky had never seen anything of the sort before, and said, with the tone of one grievously disappointed and disillusioned: "Then is it as bad with you as with us?"

"How?" I asked.

"Have you, too, no tobacco?"

"I explained that we had plenty, and that this solid block that I was cutting no substitute but the purest tobacco man could get. I gave him a piece to keep, and cut up some more for him which he packed into a round clay pipe with a bent wood stem, lit, but found rather too strong for him.

"This is our tobacco," he said, digging under his shirt and getting a little gray canvas bag out of his breeches pocket and untying this string. "We

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

made it ourselves from dried leaves.” It was a flaky gray dust. I tried a pipe of it, but found it thin, bitter stuff, with more heat than body to it.

The other old man now came in and lit a pipe also, and we all three sets smoking together. The woman stood watching us, wide – eyed and wondering, with her hands on her hips. The children slipped down from the lair behind the stove, and began running barefoot about the room, seemingly at random, but actually coming a little nearer to with every new run, like wild things.

“Martha has taken the letter to the Reds,” said the second old man, and Ignatovsky nodded.

“So you keep on good terms with both sides,” I said.

Old Ignatovsky wrinkled his eyes and said cunningly, “How not? We do not know which will advance.”

“And how do they treat you?”

“Talking with him face-to-face in a human manner is well enough. But we could well do without shooting.”

“It’s not that we mind the rifle bullets,” put in the woman. “We can always get out of the way of them. If they start shooting when we are out we can always get into the ditch. We know where they are and know where no bullet can touch us. No. I am not afraid of that even for the children. Accustomed, I suppose. It’s the shells I mind. We hear the noise of them and then they drop.” She gave the most horrible imitation of the sighing of a shell in the air. “It’s not any good to be in the ditch. They may drop there as well as anywhere else, and I’m always afraid that one will knock off a corner of the house. So far we have been lucky. They broke an outhouse, but there was nothing in it. And once, when a shell fell in the garden close to the house wall, it did not burst.”

“Quieter, quieter,” said Ignatovsky, who was visibly growing more and more uncomfortable.

“Why should I be quiet?” said the woman. “Ivan, show the gentleman the shells they throw over us.” The small boy bolted around the stove up into

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

his lair, coming back at once with a 3 inch shell, which he rolled in his hands as he carried it, though it was obviously very heavy.

“Look out,” I said; “the thing may go off if you drop it.”

“No, it won’t,” said the child. “I got it open myself, and there’s nothing in it now but bullets.” He unscrewed the head and poured out a handful of grape.

“The children watch for the shells to pitch,” said their mother, “and nothing I can say will keep them from handling them. So far, thanks be to God, we have lost nothing but a dog.”

“Which side do want to win?” I asked her.

“It’s all the same to me, so long as they stop shooting.”

“Have you had any experience of the Reds.

“They were here till the spring, when they made their trenches at the windmill just beyond us. But there’s no difference between them. They none of them know what they are fighting about. It’s my belief they fight because they have been fighting so long that they do not know how to leave off. But they ought to agree with each other and leave us alone.”

Old Ignatovsky, more and more disturbed at the woman’s talk, was evidently not sure in his own mind as to what might come of pouring out these heresies to a stranger, possibly to one of those very mysterious beings in whose interest all the shells and bullets are being thrown about.

Just then, however, Martha came back, a jolly, stumpy little woman with a brown shawl over her yellow hair, rather younger than the woman of the house and quicker – minded. She had delivered the note, she said, and the Reds would meet me as had been asked.

“Let us start at once,” I said to Ignatovsky but that old rogue, perhaps disturbed at a thought that the woman had said too much or for some other reason, had thought better of it, did not want to be mixed up in the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

business, and had got some crooked idea into his head that it would be safer to leave it alone.

“Certainly, certainly,” he said, and began groaning loudly. He stood up and stumbled a few steps with one hand on his stomach and the other in the small of his back, while the woman stared at him in obvious amazement.

“Ai, the pain!” he said. “Old Ignatovsky is an old man. You must forgive him. I will lie down for an hour or two, and then I shall be better able to come with you.”

The two women scolded at him. The other old man slipped discreetly away. Ignatovsky still groaning, look piteously at me, and said that he was prepared to go at once but....”

“You had better go to bed,” said I, “if Martha will give me a hand with a bag.”

“But how shall I report to the Commander?” He groaned again, two or three loud, well – executed groans, and took several steps towards the stove.

“I’ll send a message back by Martha.”

Enormously relieved, he stopped groaning, said nothing more about his pain, which, I suppose, he considered had served its purpose, and took an active, bustling part in the setting us on our way. The woman of the house decided to come as well as Martha, and the children were with difficulty made to stop at home.

A Feminine Escort.

So we set out from the farm, the woman of the house, the jolly, stumpy little Martha, and I sharing the baggage between us, while Ignatovsky and the children watched from the door.

As soon as we were well away from the house the women took the conversation back to the only thing that really mattered to them.

“Are you going to make them make peace?” asked Martha.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

"I wish I could," said I, and tried to explain. I might as well have saved my breath, for when I have done she started again in the same way.

"But you are English, and we know that the English can do what they want. You must tell them to make peace, and the Whites too. They don't really want to fight each other, but something makes them. I know them both. There's no harm in them. It's not like it was in the beginning, when men in red breeches rode about robbing rich and poor. Now they are just plain, simple folk. They don't understand anything. And the war goes on. You are English. Of course you can stop it."

When we were screened by some trees I gave each of the women some money in Czarist roubles, which they were very glad to have, though Martha at first refused vehemently, saying that she was glad to do anything to help if only we (the English) could give them peace. I think when I made her take the money that her hopes fell and her conviction was shaken, for she said no more from then on.

MG. March 16, 1920. #2

**An Interview With Radek In Moscow.
Poland's "Ludicrous" 1772 Frontier Claims.
The Peace Russia Wants.**

[In the following interview which our special correspondent in Russia has had with Radek, the Soviet leader, who was until recently his Governments representative in Berlin, Radek discusses the claims put forward by Poland as the basis of peace with Russia. Poles claim a return to the frontiers existing before the first partition of Poland in 1772. Radek explains why Russia will not consider this demand.]

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Moscow, via Reval

In Moscow today I visited Radek in the Kremlin, and had a long talk about the threatening possibility of the Polish advance, meaning another years fighting, another year postponement of peace in Eastern Europe.

First of all he pointed out the reasons why Soviet Russia has and can have no aggressive designs against Poland. Taking a map, he showed how Poland was essential to the old Imperialistic Russia which based its policy in the west on its desire for the eventual possession of Constantinople. The possession of Poland was on a vast scale an outflanking movement, covering the eventual pushing forward of the Russian frontiers south – east. That more or less military reason for a desire to hold Poland has ceased to exist. Further, from the revolutionary point of view, a military advance into Poland is highly undesirable. Strong national feeling would be developed. Nothing could be worse from a political point of view than that Communist rule in Poland should be associated with invading troops. Russia desires to live at peace and get on with the work of reconstruction. The proof of this is the formation of the armies which have finished their military tasks against Denikin and Koltchak into Labor armies.

"We, therefore, are prepared, and have offered some amicable agreement with them. We want a real peace, and believe that the only peace worth having is one which is a real agreement corresponding to the interest of both parties. This the Poles do not understand; having themselves aggressive tendencies, they cannot believe that we are not the same. They say they will not conclude peace under threats. We do not consider that a real peace can come when one party is taken by the scruff of the neck and forced to sign.

"We therefore do not threaten and do not insist on strategic frontiers precisely because we want a real peace, not a Peace of Brest. They, however, seem to want an unreal peace, and we say to them, "If you insist on such a peace, we, though we would prefer an honest peace, are willing to come to terms with you."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

No Peace of Capitulation.

"But," said Radek," they must not think we will sign any peace of capitulation. The mere idea of Poland forcing Russia to sign such a peace is laughable. And when they talk of the frontiers of 1772, do you know what that means? It brings the Polish frontiers to Riga, Velikie Luki, Smolensk – almost to Kiev, including the Bulk of the Land on the Right Bank of the River Dnieper. That would mean no peace, but a perpetual threat of war. Also, it would not be to the real advantage of the Polish nation.

"The Polish landlords think of creating a barrier of feudal States between themselves and Russia, and, in the obstinate delusion that a new war is inevitable, they think to prepare the battlefields so that this war shall be fought outside the real Polish frontiers. The actual result would be different. In the first place, if Poland hopes to keep these States feudal and subservient to herself, she will have to keep them permanently occupied, in which case they will be hostile to herself. Take, for example, Western Ukraine. There, perhaps, 5% of the population is Polish, but over 50% of the great landlords are Polish. If, therefore, she dreams of handing Western Ukraine to Petlura she will come into instant conflict with him, because Petlura must base himself on the peasants and so come into instant conflict with the Polish landlords.

"Is she going to be on good terms with Lithuania while taking Vilna, and what will be her relations with Latvia if she insists on pushing North and holding Dwinsk and threatening Riga? The idea of reestablishing the frontiers of 1772 under whatever masked form of vassal States is tantamount to creating enemies for Poland. Putting forward such demands, quite apart from the fact that we could not agree to them, is thus contrary to the real interest of the Polish nation.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Economic Results of a Real Peace.

"Economically, also, her interest lie in peace with us. Certain Polish metal – working factories were evacuated to the Donetz region. We were prepared to return them, in which case the Poles will get merely a lot of machinery. But in the event of a real peace we are prepared to allow the Poles to retain these factories as their own in the Donetz region, where there are raw materials and coal, and supply them with the necessary call in exchange for a percentage output – a form of concession highly advantageous to the Poles.

"Further, a great part of the Polish textile industry which is now at a standstill consisted before the war in working up Russian shoddy. The masses of this have accumulated here, and Polish experts who have investigated the amount say that we have enough to keep the Polish factories going for three years. Cobden and Bright, wrong and much else, or right in refusing to believe that one country's loss was another's gain, and we recognize that it is to our own advantage that Poland should as soon as possible be in a satisfactory economical condition. The sooner Poland recovers the sooner she will be in a position to be of use both to herself and us as a country of transit for goods between Russia and Western Europe."

An Important Position.

I asked Radek what he thought of the present position with regard to Poland. He said: "Quite impossible, be sure, because of the uncertain position of the French Government and of the extraordinary condition of the Polish Army. Its cadre of officers include, as you know, men who during the war fought in the Austrian service, in the German service, the French service of continual struggle is going on between them. We think it very probable that Pilsudski, in Warsaw, is quite unable to control the action of individual officers on the fronts.

"Thus in the White Russian sector on the River Ptitch the man in command of the troops is Colonel Sikorsky, who is the personal enemy of Pilsudski, and a competitor with him in the formation of the Polish

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Legion. He is still a colonel when his senior and a great number of his juniors have been promoted. This man reports to Warsaw that the Russians are advancing, and Pilsudski has no control. As a matter of fact throughout the summer we had insignificant forces on the western front. We have never advanced, and anybody who is at all acquainted with the western front can tell you that all the accounts of victorious battles by the Poles are rubbish, as there have been no battles at all, and Poland simply occupied the positions with the tacit agreement of our troops, which, unlike theirs, are, through their political commissars, actually obedient to the Government. Individual Polish officers of a faction opposed to Pilsudski take an individual policy.

Right of Defense.

"So far from attacking on January 29, we informed the Poles that we did not intend to fight at all west of the line then occupied by them, which line is already east of the Polish ethnographic frontier. We kept our word, but the Poles since then have crossed that line and have advanced on Homel, thereby threatening Kieff.

"We have now the right to defend ourselves at whatever point our military command consider advisable, but we still hope for a peace which, for the reasons I have given you, would be advantageous to both sides. If, however, the Poles insist on forcing a fight with them they will be defeated. They may, like Denikin, occupy for a month or two a certain space of Russian territory, but they will pay for it by ultimate defeat.

"The economic conditions of both countries are bad, but our workmen know we are doing all we can in their interests. The Polish workmen have no such conviction about their own rulers. For Poland to engage in a serious war with Russia means the inevitable collapse of Poland herself, and I cannot believe that the Poles, who realize it, will allow themselves to be tricked into war by systematic falsehoods of disloyal officers or the mistakes of leading French diplomats. France has no interest in the defeat of Poland."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. March 17, 1920.

Into Bolshevik Russia IV.

The Red Front.

“There they are,” said the elder woman.

Some hundred yards ahead of us, for we were moving almost parallel with the trenches on the edge of the forest, I saw a low rise of grassland above the marsh, and on it a big wooden windmill. Below the windmill, I could see the half – covered trenches breaking the even surface. Below them, nearer to us, was a line of wire entanglements. The track along which we were walking crossed this wire entanglements by a closed gate, and then wound up over the rise toward some small buildings, the roofs of which were just visible behind the slope.

As we came nearer a man showed his head and shoulders out of the trench, and presently jumped out, followed by another and another. Soon there was a little group of men beside the windmill, clear against the evening skyline, so clear, indeed, that I was afraid they might prove too tempting a mark to the Lettish partisans I had left behind me, and that some outpost or other unwarned to keep quiet might let fly and make things very awkward for everybody. Nothing of this sort happened, however, and presently three figures separated themselves from the group by the windmill, walked down the slope before the trenches, opened the gate through the entanglements, and came slowly to meet us.

All three were boys and an incredibly young, thin faced company commander, another child who called himself a Political Commissary, and a soldier who looked about 24 and was probably the oldest of the three. All three wore brown overcoats, the regular gray brown of the old Russian army. These overcoats are warm enough for autumn, but not warm enough for winter unless worn over padded coat and breaches. The officer and the soldier have fairly good boots, but there were holes in those of the youthful Commissary.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

I stepped forward, said “Good day” to them, showed them my passport and such papers as I had, and explained that I wished to get onto Moscow as quickly as possible. After a short consultation they said that I might come in, but that I should be unable to proceed on to Moscow until instructions have been received, as they had no orders to admit me or anyone else. This I well knew, but of course was as surprised as possible.

“But where are the White parliamentaries?” asked the officer.

I explained that I had decided that it was unnecessary to bring them, but would send back a message by the women to say that I have been well received.

They seemed a little disappointed at not having a regular ceremony, with parliamentaries on both sides, white flags, and all the pomp of a temporary armistice. It would, no doubt, have been a welcome incident in the long, dreary business of holding a front which had been stationary for some four or five months. It is an interesting experience to meet face-to-face, and legally, the men who might by night creep about in the marshes below you, execute raids in your rear, and occasionally act as targets when you yourself adventure into the debatable land. Soldiers can do a little quiet fraternizing, but persons in authority on both sides limit their civilities to the exchange of insults and bullets. The unceremonious arrival of an Englishman accompanied merely by two peasant women carrying bags was an altogether less exciting affair than they had expected. Still, even that was better than nothing, and I need have had no fears about being unable actually to get across the lines. They would have been bitterly disappointed if I had turned back.

So I thanked the peasant women, and told them to tell old Ignatousky that he could with a free conscience report to the Lettish Commander that I was now satisfactorily in the hands of the Reds, and that everything had gone off very well. “A happy journey” they wished me, and turned back down the track to the farm to till their ground and to keep themselves out of the range of bullets, while praying that no shell

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

should knock off a corner of the house instead of landing quietly in the ground and becoming a good toy for the children.

Bolshevik Hospitality.

We divided the bags and the typewriter between the Commissary, the soldier, and myself, and the young officer led the way across the trench, over the slope, and down on the other side to a group of small wooden huts where they were living.

“Are you hungry?” they asked, and I explained that I had been up since 5:30, and had eaten nothing but some dried peas.

“We can do better than that,” they said, “though we cannot do much.”

As soon as we reached their hut the soldier set about preparing a samovar, bustling about among the crowd of men in the hut, who were too much interested in what was passing between the Commissary and me to think of getting out of the way. The hut was just such a one as that of the Lettish partisans on the other side of the front – one big room with a great stove, and, besides the rugs on the stove itself, – camp-beds of all kinds fixed up in all available space. It was growing dark outside, and was quite dark within. The Commissary got a candle out the box, lit it, let the grease drip on the corner of the table for a moment, and then stuck the candle upright in the grease. By that light he examined my documents, while I urged upon him to let me proceed at once, saying the responsibility would fall on my head long before it reached his. I showed him all permissions to move about freely in Moscow, and an old letter of Lenin’s, authorizing all Commissariat’s to give them any information I might ask for about the working of their departments. Lenin’s signature had much more effect on him than the most imposing of my other documents.

“Anyway,” he decided, “you shall go to battalion headquarters for the night, for we may be moving early in the morning, and they will be able

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

to arrange things better from there.” And the officer ordered a cart to be made ready.

The soldier, who was a jolly – looking fellow, very unlike some of the wretched, poor creatures whom I saw afterwards among the prisoners taken by the Letts on my return journey was not long in making the tea. He set the samovar (a real Tula samovar, as the officer pointed out) on the table, with the teapot stewing on the top of it. Then he went off, and presently returned with a big plate of white “tvorog” (made of curds) and a small piece of black bread. He then stood by, much interested to see if I was really hungry, while the Commissary, hardly knowing what to make of them or me, went on looking at one document after another. The soldier apologized for having no sugar, and was delighted when I gave him some of my store of saccharine.

As soon as I had taken a sip of the tea he asked me how I liked it. It was of a greener tinge than tea, very pale, with a peculiar taste, quite unlike that of tea, but not strikingly unpleasant. I hardly knew how to reply, and quoted the words of the old North countrywoman, who said that the main thing about tea was that it should be wet and warm. He laughed. “There’s no tea in it,” he said. “We made it ourselves out of cherry leaves.”

“Only Fighting Because of England.”

By the flickering light of the candle the Commissary made out a date stamped on one of my papers, and remarked that I had been in Moscow later than he. “And after that you were in England. Tell me about that. How much longer are they going to make us keep on fighting? We know quite well that all these people we have to fight only fight because of England. Their soldiers are continually coming over and telling us. They have no quarrel with us nor we with them.”

I tried to explain that it was not England alone but Paris, and a Supreme Council representing the majority of the civilized world that decided the continuance of the war against them. But they would have none of it. “But by fighting us they’re not helping civilization but making an end of it,” said the Commissary. “Just look at our tea.”

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

“It may be true about Paris,” said the officer. “But how is that their troops have English uniforms? And why do they attack us now, even the Estonians with whom we were to have had peace negotiations? They must have been told to attack us. And if they did not do what they were told they would not get any more uniforms.”

“They are very good uniforms,” said the soldier, and everybody laughed. “I have got a pair of their trousers myself a secondhand, and perhaps next time I’ll get a coat

MG. March 18, 1920.

Into Bolshevik Russia. V.

A Schoolmaster Who Revered Gladstone.

It was already dark outside when they told me that the cart was ready to take me to battalion headquarters, about three versts away, where I was to spend the night. I tumbled my baggage in, and climbed in myself. They sent one soldier with me to explain me to the battalion commander, but no other guard, which surprised me very much, remembering that only a few miles away on the other side of the front it was considered unsafe to travel even in daylight except in considerable parties. They, however, seem to take it as a matter of course, and would I believe, have sent me on without the soldier only that he had another errand to fulfill which would take him into the village anyway. So I said nothing, not being at all sure as to the attitude (though it was ungenerous on my part to suspect their hospitality) and being therefore persuaded that my best plan was take everything for granted.

They shook hands with me all around and told me not to forget a greeting from the front to Moscow when I should get there. The soldier vaulted into the cart beside me and we set off. The road wound in and out among small hillocks and presently climbed a brow. It was quite dark, so I could

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

not see the extent of the hill; but it was steepest, as both driver and soldier got off, though they told me to remain where I was. This they said from politeness, but I was minded to find out whether they held me guest or prisoner, so I too, jumped off in the dark and lagged to fill a pipe. They went on, unheeding, stumbling up the hill in the darkness, and I had hard work to catch them up. It was the oldest, most pleasurable feeling to be alone on that hillside in the dark already within the lines of the Russian Soviet Republic.

We came at last to a village, and drew up at the door of the largish one story house. There was a crowd of people in the hot room into which we stepped from the road, and the steam settled on my glasses, momentarily blinding me. I asked the soldier to go ahead and followed him through the throng into an inner room, where I found a young man in the outworn uniform of a naval cadet, who was the political Commissary of the battalion, sitting at the table with a young officer, the battalion commander, both in a great state of business, making final arrangements for the battalion, which was to be relieved during the night. They got into communication by telephone with the regimental headquarters and settled that I was to spend the night with them and to go on early next morning. With that they went again at their work while I stretch myself along a narrow bench and fell instantly asleep, being pretty well tired out by the long day.

I was awakened an hour or an hour and a half later by the pain caused by my round metal compass, which was digging into the bones of my back as I lay on it in my hip pocket. I opened my eyes. The room was quite quiet. It was clear that all the day's business had been disposed of. Villagers and Soldiers had gone. The door was open, making the flame of the candle dance on the table. The officer was writing a letter, and the Commissary, who told me afterwards he had been a student in the Marine School, thus explaining his uniform, was standing looking down at me.

"I was wondering if you were asleep," he said, "or if you would like some tea. The master of the house has a samovar boiling in the next room."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

I rolled off the bench eagerly enough, and we all three went into a sort of long parlor with low ceiling, and a long table covered with a red and purple plaid tablecloth such as I have seen in English cottages, and plants in pots behind the windows. There was a bed close by the door and several others screened by curtains in other corners of the room. A curtain half closed an opening into the kitchen where there were other beds, one of which seemed to hold about half a dozen children. At one end of the table in the parlor was a very clean brass samovar, and beside it, in spectacles reading a newspaper, the perfect picture of the village schoolmaster at home, was a tall, elderly man, who rose and welcome me in peculiar, stilted Russian.

The Memory of Gladstone.

He welcomed me as an Englishman, and referred to Mr. Gladstone and to the hospitality given by England and by America to so many of his countrymen who sought refuge from the oppression of the czar. He expressed his admiration of our struggle with the Germans and his confidence that we would soon sweep them out of his own country and so allow that country to enjoy the fruits of the glorious Revolution, which, he said, must have aroused in free – born English hearts no less joy than was aroused by the defeat of the Kaiser and the enfranchisement of Germany. For his own part, he said, knowing the stories of England brought back by his countrymen and revering the memory of the great Gladstone, he could not doubt that the present misunderstandings between my country and Russia would soon be happily removed, to the benefit of both nations. He bowed slightly and invited me to be seated.

Struck by the evident distinction he drew between his own country and Russia, I asked him what was his nationality. He was a Lett, a farmer and self-educated schoolmaster. He strongly disapproved of the present Lettish Government “because they have been elected neither by a Constituent Assembly nor by the Soviets, and so in no way represent the will of the people.” He was not a Bolshevik. From the orthodox Communist point of view he was a choke-a –block with every kind of heresy. But the two young men, the officer and the Commissary, listen

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

to him with respect and spoke of him with affection. As they said, he was on the right side, whatever quaint notions he might have of international politics. Later in the night, when the advance guard of the relieving regiment arrived and its Commissary rather truculently hoped that the billet was a good one, I heard them urging upon him the peculiar merits of the master of the house, describing him as the perfection of hosts, and begging that the newcomers should be patient with his oddities for the sake of his sterling excellence. "We have altogether become part of his family," they said, "and yesterday, knowing that we were going, he roasted us a goose, which a less simple fellow would have kept to ingratiate himself with you."

I did not hear how the newcomers took the news that owing to the excellence of the master of the house the departing staff had enjoyed a goose which might otherwise have been theirs, but I did see the almost filial relation prevailing between my two young Communist and this revolutionary Rip Van Winkle, who fed me with eggs and good black bread while pouring out a slow judicious strain of talk in which Lenin and Gladstone received like honor – talk in which the revolution of 1920 mingled oddly with the notions of Victorian English Radicalism that perhaps 30 or 40 years ago had inspired him in his school mastering youth.

MG. March 19, 1920.

Into Bolshevik Russia. VI.

At Brigade Headquarters.

It snowed during the night, and soft, wet snow was falling next morning but at 6:30 I was waked and found a man and a cart ready to take me to the regimental staff. This time I had no guard at all. The driver was a Lett, extremely morose and silent, and though indeed talk was almost impossible on that miserable drive. There was a wind with the snow, and the snow was not the fine powdery snow of winter but caked as it fell,

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

covering us with the armor of half – melting ice, getting between my neck and my collar and trickling down my spine. The road was comparatively good, much better than the forest tracts of the last two days. It lay almost in a straight line over slightly undulating open country, with patches of forest here and there, until we came to a group of small cottages which seemed to be in the full turmoil of furniture shifting. Field kitchens were in the roadway ready for the march. Carts were being piled with office furniture, camp – beds, and telephones, and all the rest of the paraphernalia which are regimental staff drags about with itself.

We drove into the middle of this hubbub, and, suspecting that he might otherwise regard his task as finished and drive home, as was his manifest wish, I took the driver in with me to obtain further directions. This was indeed the regimental headquarters, but the staff was so evidently on the move that I hardly thought they would keep me there, and, as soon as I found the regimental Commander he said I was to drive on to Bokovoe, or I should find the Commissary of Brigade, who would be responsible for my further fate.

At that the Lett driver spoke up and said that he did not know the way to Bokovoe. It was explained to him in detail. He listened with the face of blank stupidity, but, as soon as we were outside, told me he knew a much shorter way himself.

“Then why did you pretend not to know?”

“I thought that perhaps they would find a local driver here and let me go home. You see, it’s another eight versts to Bokovoe, and I should have brought a better horse if I had known I was going there.”

“How long will it take us to get there?”

“The road will be worse and not better. It will take a long time.”

I climbed in again, and we set off at a foot pace through the slush. A quarter of a mile farther on, where the road plunged into the forest, it did

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

indeed grow much worse, and nothing but one of these solid springless carts would have stood the strain that was put upon it. The road was soaking wet and deep in melting snow and mud. It'd been a good role once, but guns and all the baggage of the armies had moved on it and cut it to pieces. Our wheels were continually falling axle – deep in ruts, and here and there were great holds rudely patched by filling them with fir branches. Here and there attempts had been made to corduroy particularly bad places by laying logs side-by-side across the road, but these were high above the road and it was a terrific effort for the horse to lift the cart out of the mud under the raised platform of logs, and when we descended again into the mud when the logs came to an end there was always such a jolt that I fear for our wheels.

There was a deep ditch on either side, and the best strip of the road was that on the extreme edge of the ditch. Again and again a wheel slipped, but, by and often – repeated miracle, we never overturn. On either side was thick forest, gigantic firs, here and there chopped and fallen where they had been used for road mending. We met no one for a mile or two, but then heard a lusty singing through the trees, and rounding a bend in the road, met a company of soldiers on the march. A mile or two farther on we met two field kitchens, the drivers of which ask us how far ahead were the men. We told them, and they struggled on in pursuit, jangling like tinkers caravans.

We were sheltered from the wind in the forest, though the snow fell, steady and soaking. But before we reached Bokovoe we had left the forest and come to face the wind again, and I was wet to the skin and so cold that I could not unfasten my coat when at last we turned off the road and round the top of the hill to a group of white buildings above a river.

An Officer the Old Army.

In one of these buildings I found a big clean room walled with maps, telephones at work, a soldier banging a typewriter with two fingers, orderlies hurrying in and out. It was just such a staff as I had seen many times during the old war, with this difference, that on the door inside

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

was a wonderful colored posters showing Koltchak with a crown falling forward on his head, sitting in a gilded go – cart, with the gallows attached to it, pulled at full trot by a rich peasant, a fat priest, and a still fatter banker. A tall, whispered officer of the old army turned from his table and asked what he could do for me. It was now about 1 o'clock, and we had been on the move nearly half a dozen hours. So I told him that most of all I wanted something to eat, and next to that to be sent on my way as quickly as possible. "As for something to eat," he said, "I am presently going over to my quarters, where there will be some sort of dinner ready in an hour. As for the other part of your business, it depends not on me but on the Political Commissary, who will be joining us at dinner. Meanwhile, perhaps, you will go across the river and make yourself at home at my quarters." I thanked him, and, after asking to excuse him as he had an operation in progress, and telling an adjutant to direct my driver, he turned again to his maps.

The tired horse slid and stumbled down a muddy lane over a narrow wooden bridge and up a steep bank on the farther side of the river to a big wooden farmhouse, with outbuildings that seemed to have been set at haphazard on the mud, and to be in danger of slipping at any moment down the bank and into the river at the bottom. I asked for the Commander's room, and was shown into a great barn of a place, furnished with two beds, two chairs, one table, a multitude of weapons, and a pile of empty meat tins. In one corner was a big stove, still warm, and after warming my fingers on it, I took off my coat and partially dried myself by leaning up against the stove while I waited for my host.

He came in presently, took off his boots and invited me to do the same, for mine also were wet and muddy. We then sat before the stove, warming are stockinged feet, and talked of the future of Russia and of the world in general. He was not a Communists, and did not believe that the revolution would spread to Western Europe or that it would long remain in Russia in its present form. "It is like a military operation," he said. "You cannot keep it in a state of arrested development. You must either go on or go back." "The Bolsheviks may think what they like," he said a little later, "but that does not affect the question of the defense

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of Russia. If those Russians who are bringing in foreign help do succeed in beating the revolution they will find that not only is the revolution beaten but Russia also, and that the real conquerors will not be they but their foreign helpers. But they will not win. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Those men lost control here because they were not fit to have it and could not keep it when it was in their hands. They cannot change, even for their own good. They cannot even keep up a pretense for long, and their military successes only hurry on their political disasters by giving them the confidence to show themselves as they are."

The telephone rang. "I told you I have a small operation in progress," he said as he went to it.

He listened for a moment and gave an order, after which he walked up and down the room for a minute or two before coming back to his seat by the stove.

A farm boy brought in some soup with meat in it. We shifted our chairs to the table, and the Commander unwrapped the allowance of black bread which he had brought with him from the staff wrapped up in an old newspaper.

I asked him if he thought the Whites would succeed in taking Petrograd.

"Why not?" he replied "But what then? They will make the place too hot to hold them even if they do get in. We should probably leave them there for a while until they have destroyed themselves politically, and then we should turn them out without difficulty. We cannot do everything at once, and Denikin has come a long way."

The Brigade Commissary.

Just then the Brigade Commissary came in, a short, black – eyed, electric little fellow in a fantastic uniform, with great red stars on the arms of his khaki jacket and another on his helmet – shaped khaki hat.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The Commander introduced me, and I showed my papers and told him I wanted to go on to Moscow without delay. He, however, was a precision, and nothing I could do would prevent him from telegraphing for instructions to the division and practically declaring me a prisoner. I was to remain where I was until further orders. Nothing would shift him from this position, and the friendly Commander froze meanwhile.

We had just finished eating, and were drinking some abominable tea (probably made from inferior kind of cherry leaves) when there was another ring at the telephone. The Commander went to it and stamped as he listened. I realize that while we had been talking and eating's somewhere out there fighting was going on, and men were dying, quite unnecessarily, in the mud and snow of the front.

"That point is the weakest held of all. Everywhere else the objectives have been reached. Tell the officer in charge that point must be taken at once or I will have him put under arrest. What's that? The men are tired?"

The Commissary with his mouth full jumped up and ran across the room. The Commander handed him the telephone.

"Who is speaking?" shouted the Commissary.

There was an interval.

"Let the men know that I am coming to talk to them," he shouted cheerfully, shut off the telephone, rang up the staff, and ask for a horse to be sent across it once.

"I'll have that place taken for you before dark," he said to the Commander.

"It should have been taken already."

I shamelessly put in another request to be allowed to proceed, but was told abruptly that I should hear from the Brigade Staff if orders arrive to

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

let me go farther. "We have strict orders to let no one through on any pretext whatever without orders from the Army Staff."

His horse was brought round. He wriggled into his greatcoat, hung himself over with binoculars and a revolver, and hurried out of the door. From the window I watched him right off through the snow and away down to the river.

"He's a wonderful fellow that Commissary of mine," said the Commander, who resumed his friendly tone the moment that energetic little figure was out of the room. "He can get the men to move when nothing else will. He would take them into the storm of hell itself. But the army is getting better anyway. It's a different thing from the army of the year ago."

He asked me whether the war had hit England as hard as it had hit Russia. Did we get white bread? Were there enough clothes to go round? I told him, and he said simply, "Russia was not fit for a war as big and as long as that. We should not have a revolution otherwise."

"How is it that she can fight now?"

"I often ask myself that. Something has happened to us. We shall be able to fight long after everybody else's sick of it. But we may be fighting naked before the end."

When he left me he promised to let me know as soon as news came that I might proceed.

I began writing these notes on my journey, but found I was too tired to work, having for several days had little sleep. I went to the doorway, and found to my surprise that a soldier had been set there. I was perhaps unreasonably annoyed at this very proper precaution, which I attributed to the Commissary, and therefore in choosing a bed to lie on I chose that which had a program of the Communist Party on the pillow. I read this for a little, and then, partially from sheer weariness, fell to thinking of malicious descriptive epithets to fit the Commissary. But I tired of that.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

I had hardly time to wonder what he was in private life until the Revolution gave him the work for which he had obviously been born, before I forgot him altogether, and fell solidly asleep on his bed.

MG. March 20 1920.

Into Bolshevik Russia. VII.

The Smugglers.

For the last stage of the journey to Moscow, Dragunovitch , the orderly, spurred by his own goodwill and quite unjustified sense of importance, had flourished his papers from the Divisional Staff to such good purpose that we succeeded, while the Moscow train was still in the sidings, in getting a couple of top berths in a clean-ish carriage. It is a long – established tradition in Russia that he who obtains a top berth and spreads himself upon it remains in undisputed possession. The occupants of the seats proper cannot lie at full length without disturbing their fellow – passengers or being disturbed should any come into the compartment during the night. In our compartment, meant for four persons, there were, in fact, 10. Of these four sat on each side below, while Dragunevitch and I lay most enviably on the boards above.

In this position we have the advantage of Roman Emperors at a spectacle. Lying at our ease, pillowed on our knapsacks, bags of apples within easy reach, we could observe the company below, listen to their conversation, take part in it when we chose, and when we chose withdraw into the aloofness of the upper air.

Some of the company were officials traveling on business. There was a railway inspector and the Red Cross representative of the Lettish Soviet Republic, which still had its headquarters in Rejitsa. Others were of no particular interest. But two, who were put into the carriage protesting and told that their case would be decided in Moscow, were interesting

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

in themselves and soon had the attention of everybody in the carriage fixed upon their story.

Unwilling Travelers.

They were Jews. One of them, big and curly headed, carried a loaf of bread and some sausage, which stuck out of a parcel done up in blue cloth and newspaper. He sat immediately beneath me, so that I could not see him except by leaning over for that especial-purpose. Of the other, who sat in the opposite corner, I had an excellent view. Every detail of his person and dress was typical of his race, from the curious hatchet form of his cranium, his protruding ears, the v-shaped promontory of the blue – black hair on his narrow forehead to his very pink cheeks and his guarded but restless inquisitive eyes. He was very small. Both men were dressed in black frock – coats. Both wore blue forage caps decorated with black braid, in which they carefully stowed the papers given them to explain their identity. Both were extremely frightened. The big man was frightened and quiet. The little one was nervous, could not keep still in his seat, at all cost had to talk, and began by asking, “Comrades, how long does it take to get to Moscow?”

“About 30 hours,” someone told him.

“And I did not want to go to Moscow at all,” said the little Jew. “We thought we would do our business, settle up at once, and go back. What have I to do with Moscow? Why should I go there? And he too. We both “

The big man said a word in Yiddish, and the little one continued volubly:

“Why should I be quiet? We did it for the general good. Money can be made even easier ways, quietly, at home. And now instead of settling with us, it’s ‘Moscow’ and everything sealed until Moscow decides.”

“What is the matter?” Asked the Red Cross man.

There was a third who came with us who was from Moscow and arranged everything, but as soon as the trouble began he left us, and we do not

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

know where to find him in Moscow anyway. He went on there alone yesterday, while we were still under arrest."

"Under arrest?"

"Yes. As soon as they took us from the front. They said we were spies. Then they said we were speculators. Arrested. Everything sealed. No word of thanks. No settlement. And we want to go home. It is not business."

"Where are you from?"

"Kovno."

"But that's on the other side of the front."

"We came from there. Only the other day. Bringing medicines."

"What did you bring?" Asked the Red Cross man, really interested.

The little Jew mentioned aspirin, cocaine and some other drugs.

"Nothing else?"

The big Jew pulled out of his pocket some metal eyelets for boots, such as I had seen in the Rejitsa shops. "Some of these," he said, "and a lot of cigarettes. But the Lithuanians took the cigarettes for themselves."

"How much did you bring?"

"We had eight carts altogether."

"Well, a good lot of poor fellows will be glad of that stuff in the hospitals." Speculators for the Public Good.

"That's just what I say," said the little Jew. "We were working for the public good, for the common cause, for I am a bit of a Socialist and principle myself. Live and let live, that's what I say. And at least I expected to be welcomed here, and not have everything taken from me and be accused of speculation."

"Were you bringing the stuff in at your own risk or for the Soviet?"

"Partly one and partly the other. An agent of the Soviets in Vilna told us the stuff was wanted and was ready to pay for it and pay us for our trouble. But we thought it would be better business, fair to both sides, if we were to buy the stuff and sell it at a profit, not big, but taking the risks into account, getting our payment in Czar rubles, so that we could exchange them at home."

"Uncommonly like speculation," said one of the other passengers.

"Did you have much trouble getting across the front?"

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

“It was terrible,” said the little Jew. “We had a guide with us who knew the ropes. We made no mistakes. We traveled the whole way by night with the carts, after we got the stuff away from the railway. We cross the Dvina at dawn three days ago. It was a risky business.” He shut his eyes, as if going through the adventure again in his mind.

“Did no one try to stop you crossing the river?”

We had all that fixed with the officers on the western side. They were expecting us. But the men were terrible. We could not bribe them all, and the officers who got all our cigarettes. The men began shouting out loud that we were taking stuff to the Bolsheviks, and that they would shoot. They pointed their guns at us. Then I promised to get them some of the cigarettes I had given to the officer, and they let me go back, and I brought the officer, and he cursed them properly and told them it was no business affairs, and told one of them to get into a boat and show a white flag to the Reds on the other side. Not one of the men would go. Then the officer began to be afraid. For it was already dawn, and he thought that when the day came it would be impossible to keep it all secret. So he turned to me and said: “now then, Yidd-face get into the boat yourself and pull out with the flag. We can’t wait about here all day. We’ll shoot at them if they shoot at you. So you’ve nothing to worry about.” I had a few cigarettes for myself left in my pocket, so I offered them to him. But he took them, and said that if I did not get into the boat quickly and get the business done he would wash his hands of it, and have us arrested, in which case we should be shot most certainly. And there was the dawn rising, and our eight little carts, which nothing could save. And this at the end of all our journey! So I said I was not afraid, and sat in the boat, and my companion rowed out, and I waved a flag until at last on the other side a flag waved also.

“After that it was simple. We loaded the boat with medicines and got all our stuff over in three crossings. And then, just when I thought there was nothing left but to settle up about the money, we were arrested and taken to Rejitsa. The man of Soviets who had arranged everything went on to Moscow. We have been kept locked up for two days. They asked us all sorts of questions to prove we were spies. They sealed all our

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

medicines, and now we have to go to Moscow, perhaps to be arrested there and never to get our money back at all."

"Rubbish," said the Red Cross man. "If they had not realized that it was a mistake you would not be traveling free, as you are now. If you can refer to anybody who was really working to buy stuff for Russia, so that people will see that it was not pure speculative smuggling, you have nothing whatever to be so frightened about."

"Do you think they will pay in Czar rubles, in Duma rubles, or in Soviet rubles?" asked the little Jew, hopefully. "For it makes no difference to them, and much to us. You see in Vilna one Czar ruble is worth 1 ½ Duma rubles, and one Duma Ruble is worth"

"The less you say about that the better till you get your own position fixed up."

Drugs from Germany.

Parts of this conversation recurred throughout the journey. The little Jew, deeply shaken by his experiences, would begin again, now here, now there, in his story, partly, I think subconsciously preparing it, and trying to improve its form for presentation to the people in Moscow. I asked him where the stuff had come from. He replied, "Germany." And, as I lay there on the wooden upper berth, I thought how many a wounded soldier was lying so, without drugs to ease his pain, and how strange was the new civilization of our time, which with conscious rectitude makes the Russian doctors depended on Germany for the most elementary necessities of their work, and, further, on the outwitting of the great nations of the West, who, for civilization's sake, decree that Russian wounded shall submit to operations without anesthetics, and that typhus hospitals shall been destitute of disinfectants and short of clinical thermometers. And it seemed to me to be a strange thing that the outwitting of civilization should be accomplished by such creatures as the two Jews below me, who cared not a shackle about the Russian wounded, but wondered only whether they would go to prison or be paid, and if the pay would be one kind of paper money or in another.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

We had been unable to get a glass tumbler in Rejitsa, after searching the whole town, but we had with us a tin of preserved meat. When, taught by the new civilization, we had eaten the meat out of it with our fingers, and beaten its edges smooth, it made an ample cup. Dragunevitch had a candle with him. I had saccharine. He had a packet of dried cherry leaves, which the new civilization decrees must be used by Russians instead of tea. The Jews, impressed – as who could help being impressed? – by Dragunevitch's manner and uniform, pressed us to honor them by eating a bit of their sausage. And in this way, sleeping and tea – drinking, and listening to the little Jew polishing his story, we came very pleasantly to Moscow.

MG. May 20, 1920.

The Truth About The Polish War.

**A Disastrous Struggle That Will Be Bitterly Fought.
Immensity And Weakness Of The Polish Claims.**

Esthonia May 13.

The most serious factor in the appalling economic situation of Eastern Europe is the probability of a continuance of the Polish – Russian war. It seems daily more probable that this war will be continued by Poland against the openly expressed advice of England. Unless Mr. Lloyd George expresses one view and the Foreign Office another, this war must be considered as a serious defeat of British diplomacy. Economically we are the most stable Power in Europe. To us, in Europe, other Powers must look for help either directly or indirectly. Our wishes have behind them a force more compelling than bayonets. The advice we gave was good, demanded the risking of no treasure, the loss of no lives. All the cards were in our hands.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Yet the opposite policy, that of the small circle of Polish Catholic patricians and of France, herself not in a position to bear the cost of the result, has seemingly carried the day. Peace negotiations have been broken off on the flimsiest pretexts, the Russians offering to negotiate in Estonia, Warsaw, Moscow, Petrograd, or any neutral country not excluding London or Paris and the Poles refusing to negotiate anywhere except in the little town of Borisov, close behind the front, and making that impossible for military reasons by refusing to agree to a general armistice during negotiations.

It is true that the small groups who desired the success of the warlike policy have been unscrupulous in the means they used to attain their end. Ridiculous rumors were, for example, very effectively circulated from Warsaw and Paris to the effect that Esthonia had turned Bolshevik after her honorable and entirely satisfactory peace with Russia. The object of these rumors was, of course, to prove that it was unsafe for any country, and so unsafe for Poland, to make peace with Russia. A steady campaign has gone on all this year to produce the impression in the newspapers that Russia was attacking Poland. Russia, it seemed, was still attacking when the Poles, nearly 300 miles beyond their frontiers, took Dvinsk in the North and advanced to Mozyr in the south.

These artifices were so far successful as perhaps to deprive our diplomacy of the full support of English public opinion, which its admirable intention deserved. This may partially justify our Minister in Warsaw, but, unfortunately, will in no way lessen the disastrous consequences of his failure.

Immensity of the Polish Claim.

The Poles have justified their steady advance into foreign territory by claims which produced little sensation in England, where few are closely acquainted with Continental geography, but caused most indignant surprise among the peoples concerned. Briefly, the Poles declared that they considered that they had a right to the frontiers which were theirs in 1772. The immensity of this claim will be seen from the accompanying

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

map. It is a claim to a population of nearly 30,000,000 souls – that is to say, to a population nearly 3 times as large as the population of Poland itself at the beginning of the war. It includes, incidentally, Lithuania, White Russia, the bulk of Latvia, and stretches far into the Ukraine. The claims of Germany on France, of France on Germany, of Italy on Austria, and of Romania on both her big neighbors are almost insignificant beside this Gargantuan appetite.

Nor is it as if any considerable proportion of the population within these frontiers were Polish. The following Governments of the old Russian Empire are those concerned: –

Livland	Minsk
Kurland	Mogilev
Kovno	Kholm
Vilna	Volynak
Grodno	Kiev
Suvaalki	Podolsk
Vitebsk	

Of these Poland has an ethnographical right to Khoim alone. In not one single example of the remaining governments have the Poles even 25% of the population. It is difficult to obtain exact figures, but the figures in the accompanying tables (I. And II.) were compiled at a time when no one had dreamed that such claims would ever be made by any of the races which populate that territory. They may therefore be taken as impartial. In table I. the figures for the total population of each government are taken from the Annual of 1916. The percentages are taken from the results of the census of 1897. The second table (table II.) contains figures prepared some 20 years later during the working out of projected zemstvo legislation for the northwestern and southwestern governments of Russia. These figures apply to only nine of the governments.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Considering only the nine governments which occur in both tables, excluding, that is to say Livland and Kurland which belong to Esthonia and Latvia, Kholm, which is indisputably Polish, and Suvalki , in which the Russians have no interest, the question of ownership lying between the Poles and the Lithuanians, we get the following total result: –[See End Of Dispatch]

The population of these nine governments was in 1909 22,604,222 persons, and in 1916 27,196,400. In 1911, of this population 73.2% were Russians, White, Great, or Little, 4.67% were Poles, 13.43% were Jews, and 8.48% belonged to other races. This shows only a very slight difference from the results of the census of 1897, when the population was divided as follows: – 73.8% Russians, 4.41% Poles, 13.27% Jews, and 9.23% of other races.

From table I. It will be seen that the percentages of Poles in 1897 in 10 of the claimed provinces varied from 1% to 8.2% in the remaining three governments there were 10.1% (Grodno), 23% (Suvalki, where there were 52.2% Lithuanians), and 66.1% (Kholm). In 1911, of the nine governments represented in table I., that with the highest percentage of Poles was Vilna, with 15.3%. None of the others had more than 7%. In all these nine governments, with the exception of Vilna, there were more than twice as many Jews as there were Poles, so that in comparison with Poland even Palestine has a prior claim.

The Property Claim.

The Poles, however, may be basing their claim on something other than population, although that is the principle to which most civilized nations refer such disputes. If they base their claim on landed property and not on population the Poles have a slightly better case, though even so a very weak one, especially against a revolutionary country where great landowning has come to an end. Up to the close of the first half of the 19 century the great landowners of the governments of Vitebsk, Mogilev, Minsk, Volynsk, Kiev and Podolsk were almost exclusively Polish. The great Polish landowners began selling their estates when the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

emancipation of the peasants deprived them of their serfs. In 1900 they still held about half their old properties.

But we are now in 1920, and during the early years of the 20th century the Poles continued getting rid of their estates. On January 1, 1909, just over 23% of the estates in these governments were Polish. In Vitebek government 27.8%, in Minsk 34.4%, in Mogilev 19.3%, in Kiev 15.5%, in Podolsk 21%, and in Volynsk 20%. These percentages continued to fall until the outbreak of war in 1914. These figures are taken from the data prepared for the projected Zemstov legislation in 1911.

Perhaps recognizing the fragility of their rights alike on the basis of property and on the basis of population, the Poles may found their claims on some new principle, or on the very old one that anyone has a right to what he can get, no matter how. Naturally, they will not immediately claim all these provinces for themselves. The poorer provinces of the north will pass perhaps nominally into protectorate States under Polish patronage. White Russia and Lithuania have been named as States in which this way Poland will take a friendly interest.

But the Lithuanians, who alone have had a chance of being publicly heard on the subject, use the Helsingfors Conference chiefly as a tribune from which to expose Polish tactics and to protect against Polish encroachments. It is said that they even went so far as to propose an alliance of the other border States for mutual defense against Polish Imperialism. The assistance of the border States will hardly serve Poland as an excuse. She may claim to be reaching out the hand of civilization to save these provinces from economic ruin of Russian. One would ask, remembering Mr. Brailsford's graphic picture of what he saw in Poland, whether they intend to raise them to the same condition as that of their own ruined country. That could hardly be justified as being in the interest of the unfortunate people concerned. Such salvation of the rich provinces of the southwest is rather too much like the salvation of a millionaire by a sturdy beggar, who may indeed help him to acquire merit by assisting him to give to the poor.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

A Long Struggle Likely.

All this, besides much else, must have been in the minds of English statesman when they advised Poland to make peace, not war, and told her that whereas they would assist Poland if she were attacked by Russia they would not assist her in aggression. Aggression by Russia against Poland has long been impossible, since Polish troops along their whole front of hundreds of miles from Polish territory, and it will be remembered that Russia, in her desire for peace, actually proposed a line approximate to that held by the Polish invading troops as a basis for discussion, and stated that unless the Poles continue their advance she would not allow her troops to cross it. Poland has seen fit to reject Russia's offer and England's advice, and apparently is determined, like a ruined gamester, to risk other people's money on a desperate gamble.

And what of the result? Whatever is the final outcome of this war, one thing is certain, and that is that it will be bitterly fought. The Poles cannot count on a quick conclusion, and they cannot face a conclusion long delayed. They have the better equipped army, but they will be fighting in a country where they have united against themselves the old race hatred and the desperation of peasants resisting the return of their former landlords. The Poles will mass more artillery on the front, but they will have to face more opposition in the rear.

The struggle will be neither short nor easy, even if at first, as the Russians expect, it may go temporarily in Poland's favor. For at least a year, if not more, the economic restoration of Eastern Europe is postponed, a new war supervening to complete the havoc of Armageddon. The war will be fought between two peoples on each of whom falls a proportion of the Russian foreign debt. It will lessen the ability of both peoples to pay their shares. Finally, it will increase to ignition-point the frictions already existing in Poland. The little country to which nobody wished anything but good may pay for its imitation of

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the madness and immorality of Versailles by a collapse of home which in a single week would nullify the whole of its expansion abroad.

In Soviet Russia the evolution of Bolshevism into something else will be postponed, and the war may well be the starting point of Bolshevism in Poland. In any case, it is one more useless round, one more unnecessary fandango in the dance of death which is bringing civilization in Eastern Europe daily nearer to the abyss. The victory of Poland or of Russia would do nothing to relieve the economic crisis in either country, and the fact of there being at war steadily accentuates the crisis in both. Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat. One would have thought that Europe was as tired of illustrating that aphorism as correspondents are of quoting it.

MG June 9, 1920.

**An Interview With Trotsky.
The Prospects In The War With Poland.
Prophecy A Victorious Polish Revolution.**

Trotsky for a considerable time has given no interviews to newspaper correspondents. As Military and Naval Commissar he combines the post of War Minister and First Lord of the Admiralty, and now, during the absence of Krassin, he has added to these the post of Commissar or Minister of Ways of Communication, which in the present condition of transport is perhaps the most difficult post in the Soviet Republic. The farthest he has been willing to go in giving interviews in either the Russian or the foreign press is to dictate answers to definite questions submitted on paper.

I consequently considered myself lucky when, through a mutual friend. I was able to arrange a regular interview with him. I saw him in the Commissariat for Ways of Communication. In the outer office where a strange group of officials – a sailor from the Baltic in uniform, an elderly

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

civil servant of the old Ministry, and a couple of young officers. Trotsky was sitting at Krassin's table in the inner office. Unlike Lenin, who, in spite of the bullet in him, seems but little changed, he has aged very much during the last year. His great mass of dark hair has turned quite gray. He had found a toy on Krassin's table, a little sand – glass, an instrument of torture for long – winded visitors struggling to get through their conversation before the last sand has run – an instrument that should, I think, be supplied by the State to every Russian Government department and public office. He tapped it threateningly when I asked him about the obvious analogy between the successive defeats all of Koltchak, Yudenvitch, and Denikin. "But that is old history," he said, "and you will find what you want to know about it in my report to the last All – Russian Assembly."

"Yes" I said. "I have read that report, but there is one thing missing from it. In all those defeats there was an immediate breakup in the rear following the first serious setback on the front. Yet when you came to fight the Estonians, and they too were forced back, their retirement was not followed by any troubles in their rear. Do you believe that the same formula that held good in the civil wars of the Revolution, when Russia was fighting Russian will hold good when, in the case of an attack by Poland, Russians will be fighting Poles and nationalist feelings will be engaged, quite apart from the struggle between political ideas which characterized the civil war?"

At this point, becoming interested, he became a little more friendly, and put the sand – glass away. He said: "I believe the formula will hold good absolutely, and that nationalist feeling will in the end be swamped by the political struggle inside the nation that is fighting us."

"So that here also one may say that a counter–revolutionary force, even if a national unity, would begin by gaining successes, that its use of these successes would illustrate the counter – revolutionary character, would create divisions within itself which, becoming pronounced the moment these successes began to be liquidated would lead to catastrophic collapse from within?"

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

“Certainly. The existence of strong national feeling postpones, retards, but does not prevent the process. Estonia stopped fighting in time: Who knows what would have happened if she had been forced to go on fighting for another six months? Remember that there also they have to shoot their Bolsheviks, that their Trade Unions Council expressed itself in favor of the Soviet government, and that they thereupon shot 26 and deported about 100 of the delegates, and that notwithstanding a second congress undeterred, adopted a similar resolution. The process was already clearly visible. Yet consider the position of the present Estonian Government fairly stable, because they have a very small proletariat and very large agricultural population of small farmers.

“But this does not apply to Poland at all. There they have a very large, thoroughly revolutionary proletariat, and the bulk of the peasant population is similarly revolutionary on account of the enormous size of the big estates. It is, as it were, a proletarianised peasantry. Consequently I am absolutely convinced, that though by a sudden blow they might break through and seize, for example Smolensk or Kiev, that success would be the first term in a formula which would eventually be written out in full and carried to the logical conclusion in the complete collapse of the Polish Government and a victorious Polish Revolution. National feeling will merely act as a brake on the process, but in the case of Poland a very slight one. A few months should see the beginning of the end, in case they insist on real war. Hitherto, as you know there has been no real war. [He said this in April], and they describe the capture of a party of scouts as a glorious victory of Polish arms. The fact that they do this shows in itself how weak must be their position at home.”

“And, considering the problem from the other side, do you not think that the International Revolution in Russia is gradually assuming a “national” character, and that more and more people are joining you, not because of any particular social beliefs, but because your army is a Russian army, defending Russia as well as defending the Revolution.”

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

“To a certain extent that is true. It will be still more true if Poland fights against us. As you know, we have thousands of Koltchak and Denikin officers prisoners. We have not shot them, although they shot every Communist they could catch. I asked them, “What are we to do with you?” They reply at once, “Send us against the Poles,” There is a certain feeling among that kind of Russian that the Polish attack is a sort of base ingratitude. Poland was definitely freed by the Revolution. Russia resigned her right to Poland, and now the Poles by way of gratitude wantonly attack Russia. There are Russians who think that Poland will be reconquered and again made a part of Russia. We, of course, desire nothing of the kind.”

“And in the event of your continued military success, do you not think that there is a danger of a victorious Red army carrying with it a spoilt Revolution beyond the frontiers of Russia?”

“Not the slightest. That could not happen during the French wars of 100 years ago. It could not happen today.”

I told him I had had conflicting answers from various people as to the existence or abolition of the system of Political Commissars in the army. He replied: –

“We are proceeding to abolish them in two ways. In the first place, we are training Red officers from the workman. That, however, does not give us a very great number as yet. In the second place, more and more men who were Political Commissars, Communists are now becoming fit to take command. And, on the other hand, there are more and more of the old officers, to whom we have grown accustomed, who have grown accustomed to us, have seen us close at hand, have worked with us, and are as devoted to the Red Army and as trustworthy as ourselves. Many of these officers have become Communists. Many others, while not becoming Communists are completely devoted to their duty for quite other reasons. Compare my talk with Kamenev, the Commander – in – Chief, himself not a Communist. They have realized that the Soviet Government is the only Government capable of holding Russia together

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

at the present time. If they understood why, they would perhaps be Communists, but, not understanding why, they nonetheless recognize the facts and are prepared to fight for us. You must remember that there are two kinds of patriotism; that besides the cunning, selfish, so-called patriotism that is ready to give away four-fifths of Russia to foreigners if only with foreign help and foreign troops its exponents can secure that they shall have the power in the remaining fifth, there is an ideal patriotism that is really unselfishly for Russia. As soon as we perceived that we can really trust a man, we do trust him, and so in that way also are proceeding with the abolition of Political Commissars. Why, many of the officers who work with me daily I can treat with the same confidence as comrades who have given half their lives to the revolutionary movement.”

We turned then it to the question of industrial conscription. I told him that the previous night I had heard him say something which I had not been able to remember accurately, to the effect that the idea of industrial conscription is not a new in graft on Socialism, but has always been implicit in the idea.

“Of course,” he replied. “What is the Socialist idea of society but the idea of a society in which parasitism shall be destroyed, a society in which there shall be no parasites? That does not mean that you have to stand over the parasites with a revolver, but it does mean that measures of compulsion may be applied to people who are unwilling to fulfill their duty to the State.”

I asked, Did he consider the more or less military form of industrial conscription a temporary expedient or permanent? He gave very much the same reply that Sergei Kamenev had given to a similar question:

“I consider it an accident, neither more nor less. It so happens that owing to war which has been forced upon us we have perfected our military organization first. It is the most efficient part of the State apparatus, and we therefore have to make use of it as being the only instrument, the only organization to hand. But if, for example, the Executive Committees throughout the country were an apparatus as

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

efficient, as reliable as the military organization, the business of industrial conscription might quite likely have been entrusted to them, and so would have had a purely civilian character from the first.”

I asked him whether he expected much opposition and of what kind. He replied: –

“There will be discontent among the mobilized peasants perhaps. But not if they see results. And as for the workmen, there is not a workman in Russia who does not realize that the reestablishment of transport and so if industry is an affair vital to himself. When they see that we are really doing something to reestablish it, they will participate with joy even in the discipline which is involved. I do not think much compulsion will be necessary.”

I said, “What about the skilled workman? As an Englishman with the tendencies to practical anarchism inherent in my race, I should object most strongly if I were mobilized and set to work in a particular factory. I should immediately want to work in some other factory, just for the sake of not doing what I was forced to do.”

“You would now. But you would not if you have been through a revolution, and seen your country in such a state that only the united concentrated effort of everybody in it could possibly reestablish it. That is the position here. Everybody knows the position, and that there is no other way. But once things begin to improve, the need for compulsion will disappear, together with the crisis, and eventually work will become a kind of sport.”

With my last question I returned to the Polish war. “Do you think,” I asked, “that the Polish war, if it develops, will mean a long postponement of the work of reconstruction?”

“No, I do not. In the first place we shall not be fighting on a number of fronts simultaneously. Secondly, the actual effort required will be only a fourth or a third of that used during the crisis of the civil war. Thirdly, our Army is now a different thing from what it was. We now have regular

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

divisions known by the names of their commanders, bound by esprit de corps, with known characteristics and qualities. We are no longer fighting with untried tools, solving equations with several unknown quantities. We are using for definite purposes troops which have already proved that they are fitted for those purposes. Finally, the condition of Poland is such that the struggle should not last long. They may take Smolensk, but two months after that should see them defeated.”

MG. June 18, 1920.

Russia's Raw Materials.

Transport Aid By The West Essential.

Interview With Rykov.

Reval, June 10.

Rykov, the President of the Supreme Council of Public Economy, is one of the hardest – worked man in the Republic, and the only day on which I was able to have a long talk with him (although on several occasions he snatched minutes to give me information on particular questions which interested me) was on a holiday in Easter – week, when the old Siberian Hotel, now the offices of the Council, was deserted and I walked through empty corridors until I found Rykov and his secretary at work as usual. Most of our conversation was concerned with particular economic perspectives of Russia on which I was collecting information. Some parts of it, however, were of more general interest, and these I'm putting together here.

After talking of oil, the building of the railway from Alexandrov Gai to the Emba, the prospects of developing the oil industry in that district, the relative values of those deposits with those of Baku, and the possible decreasing significance of Baku in Russian industry generally, we passed to broader perspectives. I asked him what he thought of the relations between agriculture and industry in Russia, and supposed that

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

he did not imagine that Russia would ever become a great industrial country.

He replied: "Of course not. But we may have to wait a long time before the inevitable arrives, and there is a Supreme Economic Council dealing with Europe as a single economic whole. If that should come about we should, of course, from the very nature of our country, be called upon in the first place to provide food for Europe, while the Western countries would supply our mechanical needs. We should hope enormously to improve our agriculture, working on a larger and larger scale, using mechanical plows and tractors, which would be supplied to us by the West. But in the meantime we have to face the fact that events may cause us to be, for all practical purposes, in a state of blockade for perhaps a score of years, and, so far as we can, we must be ready to depend on ourselves alone.

Gigantic Electricity Schemes.

"For example, we want mechanical plows, which could be procured abroad. We've had to start making them ourselves. The first electric plow made in Russia and used in Russia started work last year, and this year we shall have a number of such plows made in our country, not because it is economic so to make them, but because we could get them in no other way. In so far as is possible, we shall have to make ourselves self-supporting, so as somehow or other to get along even if the blockade, formal or perhaps willy – nilly (imposed by the inability of the West to supply us), compels us to postpone cooperation with the rest of Europe. Every day of such postponement is one in which the resources of Europe are not being used in the most efficient manner to supply the needs not only of our own country but of all."

I referred to what he had told me last year about the intended electrification of Moscow by a station using turf field.

"That," he said, "is one of the plans which, in spite of the war have gone a very long way towards completion. We have built the station in the Ryezan government, on the Shadul peat

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

mosses, about 110 verests from Moscow. Before the end of May that station should be actually at work. Another station at Kashira, in the Tula government (on the Oka), using the small coal produced in the Moscow coalfields, will be at work before the autumn. This year similar stations are being built at Ivano-Voznesensk and at Nijni-Novgorod. Also, with a view to making the most economic use of what we already possess, we have finished, both in Petrograd and in Moscow, a general unification of all the private power stations, which now supply their current to a single main cable. Similar unification is nearly finished at Tula and at Kostroma. The big water – power station on the rapids of the Volkhov is finished in so far as land construction goes, but we can proceed no farther into we have obtained the turbines, which we hope to get from abroad.

“As you know, we are basing our plans in general on the assumption that in course of time we shall supply the whole of Russian industry with electricity, of which we also hope to make great use in agriculture. That, of course, will take a number of years.” (I have collected detailed information and maps on these wider perspectives of Russia’s economic development which I hope to include in a separate article. They are of interest as indications of future geographical redistributions of industry in Russia, of eventual tendencies and not of immediate possibilities.)

Raw Materials: A Transport Problem.

Considering the question of the import of machinery from abroad, I asked him whether in existing conditions of transport Russia was actually in a position to export the raw materials with which alone the Russians could hope to buy what they want. He said:

“Actually we have at hand about 2,000,000 poods (a pood is a little over 36 English pounds) of flax, and any quantity of light leather: (goat etc.), but the main districts where we have raw material for ourselves or for export are far away. Hides, for example, we have in great quantities in Siberia, in the districts of Orenburg and the Ural River, and in Tashkent. I have myself made the suggestion that we should offer to sell this stuff where it is – that is to say, not delivered at a seaport, and that the buyers

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

should provide their own trains, which we should eventually buy from them with the raw material itself, so that after a certain number of journeys the trades should become ours. In the same districts we have any quantity of wool, and in some of these districts corn. We cannot, in the present condition of our transport, even get this corn for ourselves. In the same way we have great quantities of rice in Turkestan, and actually are being offered rice from Sweden because we cannot transport our own. Then we have over 1,000,000 poods of copper ready for export on the same conditions. But it is clear that if the Western countries are unable to help in the transport they cannot expect to get raw materials from us.”

I asked about platinum. He laughed.

“That is a different matter. In platinum we have a world monopoly, and can consequently afford to wait. Diamonds and gold, they can have as much as they want of such rubbish; but platinum is different, and we are in no hurry to part with it. But diamonds and gold ornaments, the jewelry of the Tsars, we’re ready to give any king in Europe who fancied them, if he can give us some less ornamental but more useful locomotives instead.”

I asked if Koltchak had damaged the platinum mines. He replied, “Not at all. On the contrary, he was promising platinum to everybody who wanted it, and he set the mines going; so we arrived to find them in good condition, with a considerable yield of platinum ready for use.”

(I am inclined to think that, in spite of Rykov’s rather intransigent attitude on the question, the Russians would nonetheless be willing to export platinum, if only on account of the fact that in comparison with its great value it requires little transport, and so would make possible for them an immediate bargain over some of the machinery they most urgently need.)

Finally we talked of the growing importance of the Council of Public Economy. Rykov was of opinion that it would eventually become the center of the whole State organism, “it and the trade unions, which will

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

then be the purely productive unions, organizing the actual producers in each branch.”

Political Parties Disappearing.

“Then you think that as your further plans develop, with the creation of more and more industrial centers, with special productive populations concentrated round them, the councils of the trade unions will tend to become identical with the Soviets elected in the same district by the same industrial units?”

“Precisely,” said Rykov, “and in that way the Soviets, useful during the period of transition as an instrument of struggle and dictatorship, will be merged with the unions.” (One important factor, as Lenin pointed out when considering the same question, is here left out of count, namely the political development of the enormous agricultural as opposed to industrial population.)

“But if this merging of political Soviets with productive unions occurs, the question that concern people will cease to be political questions, but will be purely questions of economics?”

“Certainly. And we shall see the disappearance of political parties. That process is already apparent. In the present huge Trade Union Conference there are only 60 Mensheviks. The Communist are swallowing one party after another. Those who were not drawn over to us during the period of struggle are now joining us during the process of building, and we find that our differences now are not political at all, but concerned only with the practical details of construction.” He illustrated this by pointing out the present constitution of the Supreme Council of Public Economy. There are under it 53 departments or centers (Textile, Soap, Wool, Timber, Flax, etc.), each controlled by a “college” of 3 or more persons. There are 232 members of these colleges or boards in all, and of them 83 are workmen, 79 are engineers, one is an ex-director, 50 are from the clerical staff, and 19 unclassified. Politically 115 are Communist, 105 are of no party at all, and 12 are of non-Communist parties.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

He continued: "Further, in following the other parties, the Communists themselves will cease to exist as a political party. Think only that youths coming to their manhood during this year in Russia and in the future will not be able to confirm from their own experience the reasoning of Karl Marx, because they will have no experience of a capitalist country. What can they make of the class struggle? The class struggle here is already over, and the distinctions of class have already gone altogether. In the old days, members of our party were men who had read, or tried to read, Marx's "Capital", who knew the Communist Manifesto by heart, and were occupied in continual criticism of the basis of capitalist society. Look at the new members of our party. Marx is quite unnecessary to them. They join us not for struggle in the interest of an oppressed class, but simply because they understand our aims and constructive work. And as this process continues we old Social Democrats shall disappear, and are places will be filled by people of entirely different character grown up under entirely new conditions."

MG. June 23, 1920.

Propaganda Trains In Russia.

How The Peasants Are Taught The Moscow Doctrines.

An Ingenious System And Its Inventor.

When I crossed the Russian front in October last year the first thing I noticed in peasants cottages, in the villages, in the little town where I took the railway to Moscow, in every railway station along the line, was the elaborate pictorial propaganda concerned with the war. There were posters showing Denikin standing straddled over Russia's coal, while the factory chimneys were smokeless and the engines idle in the yards, with the simplest wording to show why it was necessary to beat Denikin in order to get coal; there were posters illustrating the treatment of the peasants by the Whites; there were posters against desertion, posters illustrating the Russians struggle against the rest of the world, showing a workman, a peasant, a sailor, and a soldier fighting in self-defense against an enormous Capitalistic Hydra. There were also – and this I took

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

it as a sign of what might be – posters encouraging the sewing of corn, and posters explaining in simple pictures improved methods of agriculture.

Our own recruiting propaganda during the war, good as that was, was never developed to such a point of excellence, and knowing the general slowness with which the Russian center reacts on its periphery I was amazed not only at the actual posters but at their efficient distribution thus far from Moscow.

The Purpose of the Trains.

A few weeks ago I had an opportunity of seeing two of the propaganda trains, the object of which is to reduce the size of Russia politically by bringing Moscow to the front and to the out-of-the-way districts, and so to lessen the difficulty of obtaining that general unity of purpose which it is the object of propaganda to produce. The fact that there is some hope that in the near future the whole of this apparatus may be turned over to the propaganda of industry makes it perhaps worthwhile to describe these trains in detail.

Russia, for purposes of this internal propaganda, is divided into five sections, and each section has its own train, prepared for the particular political needs of the section it serves, bearing its own name, carrying its regular crew, a propaganda unit, as corporate as the crew of a ship. The five trains at present in existence are the Lenin, the Sverdlov, the October Revolution, the Red East (which is now in Turkestan), and the Red Cossack, which, ready to start for Rostov and the Don, was standing in the sightings at the Kursk station, together with the Lenin, returned for refitting and painting.

Burov, the organizer of these trains, a ruddy enthusiastic little man in patched leather coat and breeches, took a party of foreigners – a Swede, a Norwegian, two Czechs, a German, and myself – to visit his trains, together with Radek, in the hope that Radek would induce Lenin to visit them, in which case Lenin could be kinematographed for the delight of

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the villagers, and possibly the Central Committee would, if Lenin were interested, lend them more lively support.

Futurist Under Control.

We walked along the Lenin first, at Burov's special request. Burov, it seems, has only recently escaped from what he considered a bitter affliction due to the Department of Proletarian Culture, who in the beginning, for the declaration of these trains, had delivered him bound hand and foot to a number of Futurist. For that reason he wanted us to see the Lenin first, in order that we might compare it with the results of his emancipation, the Red Cossack, painted when the artist had been brought under proper control. The Lenin had been painted a year and a half ago, when, as faded boardings in the street of Moscow still testify, revolutionary art was dominated by the Futurist movement. Every carriage was decorated with most striking but not very comprehensible pictures in the brightest colors, and the proletariat was called upon to enjoy what the pre-revolutionary artistic public had for the most part failed to understand. Its pictures were "art for art's sake," and cannot have done more than astonish, and perhaps terrify, the peasants and the workmen of the country towns who had the luck to see them.

The Red Cossack is quite different. As Burov put it with deep satisfaction, "At first we were in the artist hands, and now the artist are in our hands," a sentence suggesting the most horrible possibilities of official art under Socialism, although of course, bad art flourishes pretty well even under other systems.

I inquired exactly how Burov and his friends kept the artist in the right way, and received fullest explanation. The political section of the organization works out the main idea and aim for each picture, which covers the whole side of the wagon. This idea then submitted to a "collective" of artist, who are jointly responsible for its realization in paint. The artist compete with each other for a prize which is awarded for the best design, the judge being the artist themselves. It is the art of the poster, art with the purpose of the most definite kind. The result is

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

something amusing, interesting, startling which, whatever else it does, it hammers home a plain idea.

Some of the Pictures.

Thus the picture on the side of one wagon is divided into two sections. On the left is a representation of the peasants and workmen of the Soviet Republic. Under it are the words "Let us not bind ourselves again..." And then in gigantic lettering right – hand section of the picture, "In the Heaven of the Whites." This heaven is shown by an epauletted officer hitting a soldier in the face, as was done in the Czarist army and in at least one Army of the counterrevolutionaries, and workmen tied to stakes, as was done by the Whites in certain towns in the South. Then another wagon illustrating methods of Tsardom, with a State vodka shop selling its wares to wretched folk who, when drunk on the State vodka, are flogged by the State police. Then there is a wagon showing the different Cossacks, of the Don, Terek, Kuban, Ural, riding in pairs. The Cossack infantry is represented on the other side of this wagon.

On another wagon is a very jolly picture of Stenka Razin in his boat, with a little old-fashioned brass cannon, rowing up the river. Underneath is written the words: "I attack only the rich; with the poor I divide everything." On one side are the poor folk running from their huts to join him, on the other the rich folk firing at him from their castle.

One wagon is treated purely decoratively with a broad, effective, characteristically South Russian design, framing a huge inscription to the effect that the Cossacks need not fear that the Soviet Republic will interfere with their religion, since under its regime every man is to be free to believe exactly what he likes. Then there is a wagon showing Koltchak sitting inside a fence in Siberia with a Red soldier on guard, Judenitch sitting in a little circle with a signpost to show it is Esthonia, and Denikin running at full speed to the asylum, indicated by another signpost on which is the Crescent of the Turkish Empire. Another lively picture shows the young Cossack girls learning to read, with a most realistic old Cossack a woman telling them they had better not. But

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

there is no point in describing every wagon. There are sixteen wagons in the Red Cossack and everyone is painted all over on both sides.

Wireless, Kinemas, Newspapers, and Books

The internal arrangements of the train are a sufficient proof that Russians are capable of organization if they set their minds to it. We went through it, wagon by wagon. One wagon contains a wireless telegraphy station capable of receiving news from such distant stations as those of Carnarvon or Lyons. Another is fitted up as a newspaper office, with a mechanical press capable of printing an edition of 15,000 daily, so that the district served by the train, however out-of-the-way, gets its news simultaneously with Moscow, many days sometimes before the belated "Ivestia" or "Pravda" finds its way there. And with this latest news it gets its latest propaganda, and in order to get to the one it cannot help getting the other.

Next door to that there is a kinematograph wagon, with benches to seat 150 persons. But indoor performances are only given for children, who must come during the daytime, or in summer when the evenings are too light to permit an open-air performance. In the ordinary way, at night, a great screen is fixed up in the open at the side of the track. There is a special opening in the side of the wagon, and through this the kinematograph throws his pictures on the great screen outside, so that several thousands can see it at once. The enthusiastic Burov insisted on working through a couple of films for us, showing the Communist Boy Scouts in their country camps, children's meetings in Petrograd, and the big demonstrations of last year in honor of the Third International. He was extremely disappointed that Radek, being in a hurry, refused to wait for a performance of "The Father and his Son," a drama which he assured us with tears in his eyes was so thrilling that we should not regret being late for our appointments if we stayed to witness it.

Another wagon is fitted up as an electric power station, lighting the train, working the kinematograph and the printing machine etc. Then there is a clean little kitchen and dining room, where, before being kinematographed (a horrible experience when one is first begged, of

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

course by Burov, to assume an expression of intelligent interest), we had soup, a plate of meat and cabbage, and tea. Then there is a wagon bookshop, where, while customers buy books, a gramophone sings the revolutionary songs of Demian Biedny , or speaks with the eloquence of Trotsky or the logic of Lenin. Other wagons are the living – rooms of the personnel, divided up according to their duties, political, military, instructional, and so forth. For the train has not merely an agitational purpose. It carries with it a staff to give advice to local authorities, to explain what has not been understood, and so in every way to bring the ideas of the center quickly to the backwoods of the Republic. It works also in the opposite direction, helping to make the voice of the backwoods heard at Moscow. This is illustrated by a painted pillar – box on one of the wagons, the slot for letters, labeled “For complaints of every kind.” Anybody anywhere who has a grievance, thinks he is being unfairly treated, or has a suggestion to make can speak with the center in this way.

When the train is on a voyage, telegrams announce its arrival before hand, so that the local Soviets can make full use of its advantages, arranging meetings, kinematograph shows, lectures. It arrives, this amazing picture – train, and proceeds to publish and distribute its newspapers, sell its books (the bookshop, they tell me, is literally stormed at every stop in place), send books and posters for 40 versts on either side of the line with the motor – cars which it carries with it, and enliven the population with its kinematograph.

A New Use for the Trains.

I doubt if a more effective instrument of propaganda has ever been devised. And in considering the question whether or not the Russians will be able after organizing their military defense to tackle with similar comparative success the more difficult problem of industrial rebirth, the existence of such instruments, the use of such means of propaganda, is a factor not to be neglected.

So far, the main use of these trains, as of the posters which they distribute, has been propaganda for the Soviets against Russian Whites

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

and their foreign supporters. But, now that the Civil War is ending, two of the trains are already being repainted with a new purpose. Although the Polish invasion may once more postpone general concentration on economic problems, may mean that for yet another year all the best in the ruined country must be spent on war, is hoped that in the near future all five trains will be explaining not the need to fight but the need to work in order to pull Russia out of the economic crisis which she was already facing in 1915, from which time until today she has never had the peace which is a 1st condition of its alleviation.

MG. June 24, 1920

An Interview With Lenin.

His Views On The Tactics Of English Socialist.

Russia's Economic Crisis: "We Shall Pull Through."

The Bolsheviks And The Peasant Opposition.

Reval, June 7.

Lenin has his own way with the interviewers. Trotsky, Radek, Rykov, like most people, use interviews as phonographs, as means of getting their views abroad. Lenin, in the most disconcerting manner, turns the tables on his interlocutor, who finds, much to his own surprise afterwards, when it is too late, that Lenin has done at least as much questioning as he, and that is a question for mathematicians to decide, who was interviewing whom.

Thus, from my notes of an interview with Lenin, just before leaving Moscow, I find that I was myself cross-examined on certain questions of English politics on which I am quite incompetent to speak (he should have kept his questions for the English Labor Delegation), whereas the subjects I had come to discuss were exclusively concerned with Russia. I must apologize for recording some of my answers, which I do merely for the sake of recording Lenin's questions and commentary, both very

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

characteristic of the man, who, as it will be seen, is very different from the narrow – minded fanatic some of his English admirers suppose him.

Mr. Lloyd George had then just made what seemed to be a move towards the formation of a definitively Anti–Labor party. Lenin ask when I thought the next election would be. I told him that, though I really had small means of judging, I imagine it would be as soon as the Prime Minister could face the country with a clear issue, for or against nationalization.

“And what will be the result?”

I told him I thought there would be a perfectly certain majority against nationalization.

“Then you do not think there will be a Labor Government in the near future?”

“No.”

He then asked whether “all the Labor parties,” mentioning by name the Labor party, the I. L. P., the. S. P., and the Socialist Labour party, would unite in a block for elections, and, further, whether in the apportionment of seats to contest the Labour Party would allot any such seats to Communists in exchange for their support. He said: “I consider it foolish in England for Socialist to refrain from voting. The revolution in England will be very different in manner from revolution elsewhere, and I should be entirely in favor of voting and, at least temporarily, of forming a block with the Labour Party.”

I said I thought it quite unlikely the Labour Party would have nothing to do with the extreme Socialist parties. He replied: “In that case it would be very good for the Socialist parties that the refusal should come from the official Labor parties and not from themselves.”

On the general international situation from the point of view of Russia Lenin said: “You must remember that the rest of Europe is composed of States of different kinds, of different social color. The moment when they

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

could have formed a single united coalition for our destruction has passed. I think we can say definitely that that moment has passed.”

I said that though in a military sense that might be so, it did not affect the question whether Russia could extricate herself from her economic crisis without Western help, and pointed out that if the next 5 years were to be years of disturbance and growing revolution Russia would get very little and that if there were a revolution in England Russia would get nothing at all.

Lenin: “In that sense, no. The shock of revolution in England would be felt at once throughout the world, and would temporarily have that effect, although it would ensure the final defeat of capitalism. But it is clear that revolution in England is not coming so quickly.” (This is a complete change from Lenin’s estimate of the situation a year ago.) “On the other hand, it is clear that though we shall not receive all we want, something, at all events, we shall receive from abroad. For example, nets for papermaking are already on the way. We have all the materials for papermaking, but needed the nets, which we could not make ourselves. German industrialist tell us that though they cannot get the German workers to work for them they are willing enough to work for us, and that if the German workers know that something is being made for Russia they will work on it as they will work at the present time on nothing else. Something we shall get. Nor do we really need enormously much, for all essentials we have here in Russia....

“Especially things will be easier for us now that we shall have petrol. We shall be getting it from Grozny we shall be getting it from the Emba district. And things are going admirably in the Caucasus. Baku may or may not become ours [it has since rejoined Russia], but in any case we shall have Baku oil. Baku businessmen are already promising us oil in exchange for timber. They cannot do without timber props. We, with the least expenditure of transport, can float these props down the rivers to the Caspian. They cannot get rid of all their oil elsewhere. Further, we shall be getting coal. We shall at first be getting very little, but gradually more and more as we restore the mines ruined by civil war. It will be a slow process, but we shall pull through.”

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

We spoke of the extraordinary measures they are adopting in this effort to pull through. I told him that in England people would find it hard to approve of industrial conscription, for example, and the militarization of labor.

“Yes,” he said, “that will be harder for English workers to understand than for the workers of any Continental country. You have a tradition of non-militarism that sets you quite apart from the Continental nations. At Socialist Congresses on the Continent the English alone invariably take a stand against conscription, whereas the others have always been in favor of the arming of the whole people. The bourgeois superstitions and prejudices concerning freedom that is no freedom and compulsion that is supposed not to be compulsion so long as it is invisible are deeper rooted in England than anywhere else. In France or Germany they will understand us at once. In England they will find it much more difficult.”

We then spoke of the peasantry. I asked what was his estimate of the general attitude of the peasants today. He replied by quoting Hegel he said: “Hegel wrote “What is the people? The people is that part of the nation which does not know what it wants.” That is a good description of the Russian peasantry at the present time, and it applies equally well to your Arthur Hendersons and Sidney Webbs in England and to all other people who want incomparable things. The peasantry are individualists, but they support us. We have in some degree to thank Koltchak and Denikin for that. They are in favor of the Soviet Government, but hanker after Free Trade, not understanding that the two things are self-contradictory. Of course if they were a united political force they could swamp us. But they are disunited both in their interests and geographically. The interests of the poorer and middle class of peasants are in contradiction to those of the rich peasant farmer who employs laborers. The poorer and middle class see that we support them against the rich peasant, and also see that he is ready to support what is obviously not in their interest.”

I said: “If State agriculture in Russia comes to be on a larger scale, will there not be a sort of proletarianisation of the peasants, so that in the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

long run their interests will come to be more or less identical with those of the workers in other than agricultural industry?"

He said: "Something in that direction is being done, but it will have to be done very carefully, and must take a very long time. When we are getting many thousands of tractors from abroad, than something of the sort would become possible."

Finally I asked: "Did he think they would pull through far enough economically to satisfy the needs of the peasantry before that same peasantry had organized a real political opposition that should overwhelm them?"

Lenin laughed. "If I could answer that question I could answer everything, for on that answer to that question everything depends. I think we can. Yes, I think we can. But I do not know that we can."

MG. July 1, 1920.

Russia In 1915.

**Letters From The Tsaritsa To The Czar At G.H.Q.
Her Constant Anxiety For Rasputin-"Our, Friend" "The Man Of God."
How The Czar Was Induced To Dismiss The Grand Duke Nicholas.**

I have been lent for 24 hours a manuscript copy of the letters written by the Tsaritsa to the Czar during his visits to Russian headquarters, Sevastopol, and other places in 1915. The letters are numbered from 265 to 415, and dated from January 21 to December 31. One letter is missing. This manuscript was copied from the originals in the archives in Moscow. The period covered by these 150 letters is that of the severest military trial of the Russians, from their triumphant capture of Limberg and Przemyśl, through the retreat from Galicia and the loss of Warsaw, to the general retirement of the Russian army to the line from which Brusiloff's advance in 1916 and the desperate June rally of Kerensky in

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

1917 were its last exploits before it collapsed altogether. The Russian army in 1915 was receiving mortal wounds. It was receiving them as an Imperial army, and the autocracy itself reeled under the blows which the army received. With each defeat the autocracy yielded a little, never enough to earn a long respite, but enough to teach the nation that a defeat on the front meant at least half a consolatory victory for those who wanted constitutional reform at home. All of this is clear enough in these letters, which show to how appalling an extent was diseased and undermined the system that the Imperial army was defending.

The year began well. The first few letters of the Empress were calm, domestic, religious almost cheerful. Their tone changed, the note of anxiety was keyed higher and higher as victory turned to defeat and defeat unleashed the myriad discontents that undermined the whole fabric of the Russian Empire. Under that stress the daily letters which the Empress wrote to her husband became the desperate letters of a person desperately attacked. The war, so far from occupying a larger place in them, was pushed aside to make room for horrors nearer home. Scandals that a victorious autocracy could serenely ignore threatened the eventual doom of an autocracy in defeat. There were enemies everywhere, and the poor woman saw her life and that of her husband as a continuous struggle against implacable foes, dammed in the next life but capable of being very dangerous in this. Three main threads run through the letters, besides an almost hysterical affection for her husband - fear of exposure for Rasputin, hate of the Duma and all the more or less democratic Russia which that institution very imperfectly represented, and wild jealousy of the Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaevitch, who, until Rasputin had him dismissed, was commander-in-chief of the Russian armies. Of these three motives, the first controls the second and is closely connected with the third.

There is something horrible in reading the private intimate letters of anyone who came to a tragic end. Instinctively we dread to know them too well, lest their catastrophe be brought more intimately home to us - unless we are of those who vicariously delight in terrible fates. There are people for whom the horrible fate of an acquaintance is as it were an acquisition. For myself, I will frankly confess that historical curiosity

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

vanished quite often in the merely human compassion and pain as I passed from letter to letter and, in the letters, from something very like mania to little simple bits of news about a favorite dog or delight in a spell of sunny weather.

The Doomed Raft

But the letters throw too valuable a light on the central figures of the Russian drama to be laid aside for such a reason even by those who consider the main events of that drama to be the results of economic rather than human forces and see in Nicholas II and his wife, Rasputin and Vyrubova, no more than marionettes illustrating in little the decay of a system for the end of which they were not particularly responsible. If we take this view their tragedy becomes not less but greater, their littleness merely adds to the grandeur of a drama in which the Greek Fates are replaced by no less irresistible, no less unpersonal forces, and, as in the tragedy of antiquity, the persons of the play seem to go??? their parts, carefully, with precision, on a raft which a vast torrent, apparently unnoticed by them, is sweeping at terrific speed towards the final cataract.

It is that drama on the doomed raft that these letters illumine. I remember during these years in Petrograd there were many opinions as to the mutual relations of the actors. Some held that the Tsaritsa dominated the scene and must be held responsible for errors of her husband. Others ascribed to the Czar the follies and mistakes that followed one on another, the dazzling juggery with Ministerial posts, the astounding selection of incompetents and rogues, a selection too wanton in caprice to be attributed even to chance. Others saw in it all the cunning of the German Secret Service working on the superstitions of the autocrat and his wife through the unscrupulous agency of the dissolute charlatan Rasputin and his accomplice Anna Vyrubova. Others, again, said openly that the Germans had a willing ally at Court in the person of the Tsaritsa. All these theories find their answer in the letters.

It is clear that the dominating personality at Tsarkoe Selo was not the Czar but the Tsaritsa. After reading these letters, in which she

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

continually laments her loss of power over him while he is out of her presence, and tries to dictate or suggest his speech, even his gestures, in dealing with those whom he meets at Headquarters, I no longer find incredible the narrative of a man, well acquainted with the Palace, who said that in the room where the Emperor habitually received his Ministers a special arrangement of screens had been made so that the Empress, in an armchair, unseen, might be present at each interview. Nothing less would have satisfied her anxiety to supplement his judgment. But if her influence on him was great, she was herself influenced by others, though these for the most part made use of the strong motives that already agitated her nervous personality and did not attempt to float their paper boats against the stream.

Rasputin.

Rasputin, it seems, could, by playing on her fear for the autocracy or his precious person, summon or prorogue the Duma, could make her or unmake Ministers, could and did dismiss the Commander – in – Chief, could send the Czar to receive applause for a "spontaneous" visit to the troops, or could recall him to Petrograd. It is equally clear that the Tsaritsa lost a great part of her influence on the Czar as soon as he was out of her presence and far enough away to be relieved of that dread of hysteria in a companion which may make even a strong personality (which his was not) subservient to a weak. Hysteria in letters is less terrifying than hysteria in the next room.

When the Czar was out of the Tsaritsa immediate influence he did not even continue the line of policy she had dictated. He was rudderless and ready to fall at once under the influence of someone else. Nothing else could explain some of the Ministerial appointments (notably that of Samarin as Procurator General of the Synod), which, while suiting the book of the Grand Duke, who wished to destroy Rasputin, were directly contrary to the desires of the Tsaritsa. At headquarters the Czar was in a very different atmosphere from that of the Tsarkoe Selo, though even there the Empress and Rasputin had their outposts in certain members of his personal suite. And in these letters, written from one camp to the other, the Autocrat of All the Russias presents the figure of a little boy

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

gone from a molly – codling home to a public school, followed by a letter after letter full of nervousness as to his possible escapades and warning him against this or that companion who may undo or weaken the influence less of an equal than of a parent.

Rasputin is referred to throughout the letters as "our Friend," or "the Man of God," or "Gr." (Grigori). He is always given a capital letter before "His" or "Him," as if he were indeed divine. It is clear that whatever he said had for the Empress the authority of Heaven. It is also clear that like many religious people, she found Heaven very ready to fall in with her way of thinking, and that she used Rasputin's sayings to reinforce her own advice, assuming, with just enough hysterical emphasis to show that she was not really sure, that his words had as much weight for her husband as they had for herself.

"The Man of God."

We get only a vague impression of Rasputin's character from the letters, but this cannot be wondered at when we remember that she who wrote them thought of him as a prophet sent with a special mission to Tsarkoe Selo from the Almighty. She expected thunderbolts to fall on his detractors, and thought that the country would be visited by a divine vengeance if the Czar should allow him to be "persecuted." She thought the Grand Duke could not but fail since "he had turned simple traitor to a Man of God." How could the Man of God become in her letters a concrete and merely human person? Nonetheless, incongruous and most unsaint-like touches are here in plenty. Her sense of his holiness does not seem to have been affected in the least by the fact, recorded by herself, that he justified on most specious grounds the acceptance of large sums of money from people who wanted decorations. When Khvostov proposes, and the Empress supports his proposal, to decorate Rodsianko, the President of the Duma, so that he "would sink in the eyes of the Left party for having accepted a reward from you," she observes, "Our Friend says also that it would be a good thing to do. Certainly it's most uncongenial, but alas! times are such just now that one is obliged out of wisdom's sake to do many a thing one would rather not have."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

It appears that Rasputin's influence was not always malign. Now and then, with regard to the Duma, for example, he gave the sound advice of an astute politician, and though the Duma might have been offended had it known that it was summoned and that the Czar met it in person on Rasputin's recommendation, no member of it would have denied that the dramatic act was well conceived. Much earlier than most members of the Government he perceived the real danger that was eventually to sweep away both him and his protectress, and in October, 1915, called attention to it in his own way. On October 10 the Empress reported to the Czar that the holy man has seen in a vision that it was necessary to bring wagons with flour, butter, and sugar from Siberia. He saw the towns, railways, etc., and old soldiers loading the trains. He proposed that for three days nothing else should be done. Then there would be no strikes. "He blesses you for the arrangement of those trains." He gave bad advice, which the Tsaritsa amplified with all the energy of hysteria, when he feared for his own skin and the publishing of the facts of his behavior and influence. And sometimes, even on such occasions, more astute, farther – seeing than the Empress, he restrained both her and Goremykin (President of the Council of Ministers) from follies they were prepared to commit on that account.

Anna Vyrubova.

Anna Vyrubova, the divorced wife of a naval officer, was in the popular mythology of Petrograd in that year a sinister figure scarcely less important than Rasputin. Judging from the letters her importance was entirely in the past. She is referred to in the letters as "A" or "Ania." At this period the Empress's affection for her had cooled and she spoke of her with some resentment. She complained that Vyrubova wrote as many as 5 letters a day to her. "It is quite good she does not see me some days, though last night's sixth letter complained she had had no good night kisses or blessings for so long. If she would kindly once remember who I happen to be, then she might learn to understand that I have other duties besides her." Her part at this time seems to have been limited to acting as a transmitter of advice and prophecy from the scandalous Varnava, bishop of Tobolsk, and from Rasputin when he, for

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

various reasons, had not the opportunity of seeing the Empress personally.

MG. July 1, 1920.

The Letters Of The Tsaritsa (continued)

The historical value of the letters, besides the light they throw on the first German move for peace with Russia, in April, 1915, on the position of the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevitch , and on the political events of the period, lies less in the information they contain about individuals than in their preservation for all time of the mental atmosphere of the Court in which such a figure as Rasputin's could attain to such supremacy. To understand the possibility of such an atmosphere, in which Ministers employed spies on each other and crawled to favor by sycophancy to a disgusting charlatan, while honest man fled sickened and revolted, or, if for their country's sake they tried to open the windows, were speedily supplanted by the more ambitious and less scrupulous, it is necessary, and not difficult, from the material supplied by the letters, to construct a portrait of the Empress. If she had been a different woman, such a Court, such an atmosphere, would have been impossible.

The Empress's Beliefs.

The Empress was extremely religious, and had at the same time the profoundest conviction that the duty and use of the Church was to support and protect the autocracy. She could in one breath mingle devout sentiments with a passionate resentment of the Holy Synod for its attacks on Rasputin, which she described as treachery, since they were indirectly an attack on herself and the Czar. She thought the Church needed "soul, not brain." Religion for her was less concerned with good and evil than with belief in a personal deity as given to favoritism as she was herself. She was religious as a great lady might

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

have been in the 12th century with a belief in charms and such things that would be incredible if it were not preserved in her letters. In that critical month of August, 1915, for example, she writes to the Emperor at the front: "Remember to comb your hair before all difficult talks and decisions; the little comb will bring its help." The monk Iliodor , "our first Friend," had given her a magical image with a bell, the ringing of which was to warn her against evil, and so help her to know friends and enemies. She gave "prayer – belts" to officers going to the war. "I am told that those soldiers who wore them in the last war were not killed." She reports that Barnaby telegraphed from Kurgan about a cross that appeared in the sky as a sign of God's love, and adds, "God grant it may be a good sign; crosses are not always."

Of her advice due to the Czar she wrote: "It's not my wisdom, but a certain instinct given by God, without my willing it, so as to be your help." She had a peasant woman's belief in the efficacy of candles: "The children and I went to church at 3 1/4, and I placed a very big candle which will burn very long and carry my prayers to God's throne for you – before the Virgin and St. Nicholas." She sent huge quantities of icons (sacred images or pictures) to the front, to generals as well as to the soldiers; "Please give this little Image of Joann Voin [Joann the Warrior] to Alexeiev [Russian Chief of Staff], with my blessing and fervent wishes. You have my Image I blessed you with last year – I give you no other, as that carries my blessings, and you have Gr's [Rasputin's] St. Nicholas to guard and guide you."

Belief in Autocracy.

Besides and as a part of her primitive religion she had a belief in autocracy and divine right which also would be hard to credit were it not for this mass of written evidence. God was an Autocrat in heaven, with a special care for those smaller autocrats who represented him on earth. She thought the destruction of Serbia was "probably a punishment for the country for having murdered their King and Queen," and would no doubt have pointed to the present economic state of Russia as a divine vengeance for the violent deaths of Rasputin, the "Man of God," followed by those of herself and her family. She regarded the preservation intact

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of the Autocracy as a sacred duty, and any yielding in the direction of constitutional reform is something very like a sin. "Am so glad you declined seeing those creatures [a deputation of public men]. They don't dare use the word Constitution, but they go sneaking round it– verily it would be the ruin of Russia, and against your coronation oath, it seems to me, as you are a Samoderzhetz [Autocrat], thank God."

Judging by her own very real belief in autocracy she ascribed an entirely imaginary belief in it, and reverence for its representatives, to all but a small group of hardened villains such as Gutchkov for whom she thought God might with justice prepare "a bad railway accident in which none but he should suffer." She believed that the mere sight of the Czar was an incomparable consolation to the troops. "Are there no troops for you to see near Orcha? or Vitebek? You might give up an afternoon to that. You think me a bore, but I long for you to see more troops, and I am sure young soldiers pass by on their way to fill up regiments. They might march past you at the station and they will be happy." Also when she herself was going to Headquarters to fetch little Alexei; "It would be awfully interesting to see the troops, only two versts from Vitebsk by motor. Our Friend [Rasputin] wanted me also to see troops, from last year to now he speaks of it – that would also bring them luck." When the Czar went to Reval she "can imagine how enchanted the English submarines must have been that you inspected them – they know now for whom they are so valiantly fighting."

Stiffening the Czar.

Another result of this belief and of her own powerful character was a simultaneous effort to make Nicholas be a real autocrat and at the same time to make him do what she would have done if she had been autocrat in his place. "You are Lord and Master in Russia, Samoderzhetz, remember that." "Courage, energy, firmness will be rewarded by success. You remember what He [Rasputin] said, that the glory of your reign is coming and we shall fight for it together, as it means the glory of Russia – you and Russia are one." "God will help. Be firm and energetic – right and left, shake and wake all up, and smacked firmly when

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

necessary. One must not only love you but be afraid of you, then all will go well." That was on September 3. Six days later she tells him to "Go on being energetic... now is the fight to show them who you are and that you have had enough. You tried with kindness but that did not take; now you will show them the contrary, the Master Will." In one of the letters I have copied in full she asked when will he thump with his hand upon the table and scream at his (or rather her) opponents. But she had poor material for a Peter the Great in the shrinking Nicholas, and was too fond of him to make him a Peter the Third.

Now and then, however, in that benighted, miserable figure, finding her way with sacred candles through a labyrinth of intrigue for the protection of Rasputin and Vyrubova, a labyrinth heavy with the smoke of incense and dangerous with thorns, we see faint reminiscences of the robust abnormality of Catherine the Second. Nicholas was not the only man whose energy and firmness were not such as to satisfy her. Ministers, generals, manufacturers, all came under her censure. She said she was ashamed of the disorder of Russia, mentioning the issue of stamps instead of coin, and the forging of these stamps. She writes impatiently, "All men seem to wear petticoats now." More than once, jokingly, she speaks of her "trousers". "I see my black trousers are needed at the Stavka (Headquarters)." and again, "I assure you I long to show my ever memorable trousers to these poltroons" (the Ministers). She wrote of Ministers in general quite in Catherine's manner. On August 29, for example: "I long to thrash nearly all the Ministers." With regard to diplomats also she is all for short shrift's. When Bulgaria joined Germany she wrote: "My personal opinion is that our diplomats ought to be hung." And again: "What are the Bulgarians up to – why is Sazonov such a pancake?"

Hatred of the Democrats.

Democracy for her was the dragon and the autocrat was a St. George whose weak muscles she tried to nerve to the struggle by transmitting to him some of the hate she felt herself. Half of the Council of State consisted of elected members: "How disgusting that Gutchkow.,

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Riabushinski, Weinstein (a real Jew, for sure!), Laptow, Shukowski have been elected to the Council of State by all those brutes." There had been long agitation of a polite and delicate kind in favor of making Ministers responsible to the Duma. She comments (with Goremykin at hand): "Certainly not a Minister who answers before the Duma, as they want; we are not ripe for it, and it would be Russia's ruin – we are not a constitutional country and dare not be it; our people are not educated for it; and, thank God, our Emperor is a samoderzhets and must stick to this as you do, only you must show more power and decision. I should have cleared out Samarin and Krivoschein quickly the latter displeases the old man [Goremykin] greatly, right and left and with excitement beyond words. Goremykin hopes you won't receive Rodsianko . Could one but get another instead of him, an energetic good man in his place would keep the [Duma] in order.

Her own hatred of all the manifestations of democracy was intensified to burning – point by the existence of Rasputin. Every democratic institution (even urban district councils) seemed to her to have no other object than to bring this scandal still further into public view, or, as she put it, to persecute the Man of God, and, in attacking him, to attack herself and so indirectly the Autocracy. "The Petrograd Town Duma needs smacking." "I have no patience with these meddlesome chatter boxes." "They are talking of proroguing the Duma [prorogation of the Duma] till October 15. Pity date is fixed so early again, but, thank goodness, the Duma are now dispersed – only one must work firmly now to prevent them doing harm when they return. The press must really be taken better in hand,= they intend launching forth things soon against the Ania [Vyrubova] that means me again. A. sent a letter to Voeikov today that he must insist Frolov should forbid any articles about our Friend or A. being written. They have the military power, and it's easy for them – Voeikov must take it upon himself; your name has not got to be mentioned. In his place Voeikov has to guard our lives and prevent anything that harms us, and these articles are against us; nothing at all to be afraid of, only very energetic measures must be taken – you have

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

shown your will and no slacking in any direction,- once begun it's easy to continue."

The Duma

She never had a moment's peace while the Duma was sitting. "Won't the Duma be shut at last – why need you be here for that? How the fools speak against the military censors shows how necessary." Again, "Only shut the Duma quickly before these questions come out." Again, "Now the Dumtzi

[men of the Duma] want to meet in Moscow. One ought energetically to forbid it, it will only bring great smuty [disorders]. If they do that one ought to say that the Duma will then not be reopened till much later – threaten them as they try to [threaten] the Ministers and the Government. Moscow will be worse than here; one must be severe. Oh, could not one hang Gutchkoff! You cannot imagine what a joyful surprise it was to receive your sweet letter."

She was not content with making impossible any compromise between the Autocracy and the people who had outgrown it. The same motives that made her resist even the most tentative efforts of democracy made her interfere with the army and brought her into conflict with the Church.

The Commander-in-Chief, the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevitch, was definitely disgusted by the Rasputin business, and used his influence in favor of those who, at risk of their careers and freedom, were trying to expose that charlatan, and, by dragging him and his depravities into the public eye, to make his position at Court untenable. Nicholas Nicholaevitch was not a very clever man, but he had at least two of the characteristics that the Empress in vain sought for in her husband. He knew his own mind, and was extremely willing to "smack firmly when necessary." There is a story told of him that on learning during the battles for the defense of Warsaw that a great number of officers were enjoying themselves in that city instead of taking part in his defense. He drove to the principal restaurant and sent in his aide – de-camp to order in the name of the Commander-in – Chief that all officers were to leave

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the building immediately. It appeared that many were drunk. As each man came out of the door into the street he was confronted with the tall Grand Duke, who dealt him a blow over the head with his walking stick, quite in the manner of Peter the Great. It really matters little whether the story is true or not.

Such was the figure of the Grand Duke in popular mythology, and as such he could not but rouse the violent jealousy of the Tsaritsa. The Empress saw in the Grand Duke, first, an opponent of Rasputin and so of herself, and secondly even a possible pretender to the Throne. On this latter idea, perhaps put into her mind by Rasputin, she laid particular stress in her letters to her husband, who, when at headquarters, was quite ready to fall under the Grand Duke's influence. She resented even the Grand Duke's occasional visits to Petrograd, when he conferred with Ministers and sometimes, even in Russia, succeeded in getting things done in a hurry. She said she thought it was the duty of the Ministers to resign on that account. Finally, she and Rasputin between them succeeded in getting the Czar to dismiss the Grand Duke and send him to the Caucasus.

Attacks on the Grand Duke.

Her frantic jealousy dictates the most extraordinary insinuations. Thus, "A man who fought against N was shut up for eight months. Now, there, they know how to stop the press when it touches N. . "(but not when it touches Rasputin). Again, "When the prayers from the Synod for you those three fasting days were being read in front of Kazansky Sober [the Kazan Cathedral in Petrograd] 1000 portraits of N. were being distributed to the crowds. What does that mean? They had intended quite another game. Our Friend guessed their cards in time, and came to save you by entreating you to clear out N. and take over the command yourself." Even after the dismissal she was not at peace. The Grand Duke took his time about his journey south. "P. asked why N. is still in the country, and whether it was true you wrote he was to rest in the Caucasus at 'Borschom'. I said yes, and that you had allowed him 10 days at Perschino Levy, order him south quicker; all sorts of bad elements are collecting round him and want to use him as their flag. (God

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

won't permit it'). But it's safer that he should be quicker in the Caucasus. You said 10 days, and tomorrow it's three weeks since he left the Staff. Be firm in that too, please." To strengthen her husband's determination she tells him that people already call the Grand Duke "Nicholas III." There are other references of the kind in the letters I have copied, and many more in the complete collection. The Empress had no need of any German motive to be, without wishing it, a disintegrating force behind the Russian front.

Her quarrel with the Church was of the same kind, partly on account of Rasputin, partly resentment at what she considered its encroachments on the rights of the Autocracy. Peter the Great put the Russian Church in its place as a State – controlled institution, getting rid of the Patriarch and inventing the Holy Synod with its Procurator General appointed by the Czar. Even he, however, went no farther than this religious lady in seeking to make it directly subservient to the personal caprice of the Autocrat or his wife. When he was in England, English merchants expressed their fears to him lest the intolerance of the priests should make it useless to export tobacco to Russia. He told them he knew how to keep priests in order. And indeed he had so far reduced the Church that he could and did make it accept his views of tobacco. This lady, in the 20th century, required that it should accept her view of Rasputin. This it could not do without sharing in the public mind the debasement of the Court.

It so happened that the Procurator General, Samarin was a public – spirited man appointed, to her own and Rasputin's horror while the Czar was out of her immediate influence. He, with some of the honester bishops, put up something of a fight, but, with the appointment of less scrupulous persons, such moral authority as was left to the Church was definitely shattered, and another step had been taken in preparing the revolution. What Voltaire in his way did for the French Church in the 18th century, Rasputin and the Empress in their way did for the Russian in the 20th.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The Church.

Her attitude towards the Church is plentifully illustrated by her comments on her feud with Samarin "We must clear out S., and the sooner the better. He won't be quiet until he gets me and our Friend [Rasputin] and A. [Vyrubova] in a mess – it is so wicked and hideously unpatriotic and narrow – minded." There was a row in the Synod over some detail of ritual ordered by the Czar, and Samarin made use of it to cross – question Varnava, the Bishop of Tobolsk, concerning his ally, Rasputin. She writes: "I saw poor Varnava today. My dear, it's abominable how S. behaved to him in the hotel and then in the Synod – such cross – examining as is unheard of, and he spoke so meanly about Gr. using vile words and speaking of Him." It was said that the Czar had no right to order particular rituals, "upon which V. answered him soundly and said that you were the chief protector of the Church, and S. impertinently said you were its rab [slave]. Colossal nakhalstro [cheek] and more than ungentlemenlike, lolling back in his chair with crossed legs cross – examining a bishop about our Friend." Two days later: "The story of V. is going too far. He did not go again to the Synod because he will not hear your orders mocked at. The Metropolitan calls your telegram glupaya telegramma [a stupid telegram]. Such impertinence cannot be borne. You must set your broom working and clear out the dirt that has accumulated at the Synod. All this row about V. is only so as to drag our Friend's name into the Duma. When S. accepted this place he told his set at M [Moscow] that he took it only because he intends to get rid of Gr., and that he will do all in his power to succeed. They betted in the Duma that they would prevent you from going to the war – you did go. They said nobody dare close the Duma – you did. Now they have betted that you cannot send S, away, and you will, and the bishops too that sat there and mocked at your orders." She recommended that N.K. Shvedov should replace Samarin, "but of course I do not know if you find a military man can occupy the place of oberprocurator of the Holy Synod. He has studied the Church history well, has a known collection of Church books, when he was at the head of the Vostokov Academy he studied the Church also, is very religious, and devoted beyond words (calls our Friend 'Father Grigori')."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

It is probable that a revolution never begins until the arrival of a moment when every party in the State is dissatisfied with things as they are. When the Russian Revolution began, every bulwark of the Autocracy had already been mined or destroyed. The nobility and the blood relations of the Czar had been estranged by the scandal which the Rasputin affair brought upon their order and their family, the Church had been similarly alienated, the army was profoundly convinced that treachery found shelter above, the pro-Germans were dissatisfied with the prolongation of the war, the pro-Allies were dissatisfied with the unsucccess with which the war was waged, and the populace as a whole was deeply stirred by forces that were eventually to make an end of the whole machine.

The Empress's Responsibility.

The writer of these letters did her full share in hastening the moment when all these mutually opposed interests should be united at least in the belief that continuance without some sort of change was no longer to be borne. The pistol that shot Rasputin gave the signal that this moment was at hand. The Empress had thwarted every move that might have led to concessions, to a Constitution, to any lessening of the tension between the Autocracy and the nation. Thanks largely to her, there was hardly a man who was willing to risk his life in defense of a regime so obviously rotten at the core. All who are glad that there was a revolution will perhaps agree with her in her profound belief that she was among the pre-destined saviors of Russia.

Not the least important trait in the character of a human being is the character which that human being attributes to itself. If we are to attain anything like a just view of the Empress we must remember that all she did was done in the full persuasion that God was on her side and that her opponents were directly animated by the devil. When she heard that a provincial governor had said that she was a madwoman and that Vyubova was a bad lot, she wrote, "How can he remain after that? You cannot allow such things. These are the devil's last efforts to make a mess everywhere, and he shan't succeed." We have seen her alienating the Church, disrupting the Army, urging the Czar to one folly after

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

another. Her New Year's letter to her husband shows how entirely different was her own conception of herself: –

"My own Sweetheart, – This is the last time that I write to you in the year 1915. From the depths of my heart and soul I pray God Almighty to bless 1916, quite particularly for you and our beloved country. May He crown all our undertakings with success, recompense the troops for their bravery, send victory to us, show our enemies of what we are capable. The sun shone five minutes before you left – I have noticed it each time you left. And, as our Friend says, we should always pay attention to weather, I trust that, forsooth, it is a good augury.

And for internal calm – to crush those effervescing elements which try to ruin the country and give you endless worry, I prayed last night till I thought my soul would burst, and cried my eyes out."

That last note of pain rings true, and should not be forgotten in considering this terrific indictment of autocracy by itself.

MG. July 2, 1920.

**The Real Crisis Of Russia.
A New And Terrible Stage Of Decay Threatened.
Collapse Of Transport And Its Deadly Effects.
A Detailed Account Of Russia's Economic Needs.**

Reval, June 7

In many articles from Russia I have written of the efforts of the Russians to find a way of the economic crisis. It occurs to me that I have written no description of the crisis itself, nothing to give English people an idea of its gravity or of the significance it should have for themselves. I propose to put together a few facts, chosen from thousands, to illustrate the conditions which Soviet Russia is struggling to improve, the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

characteristics in Russia of the crisis which the war has brought on Europe as a whole.

Nothing can be more futile than to describe conditions in Russia as a sort of divine punishment for revolution; or, indeed, to describe them at all without emphasizing the fact that the crisis in Russia is part of the crisis in Europe, and has been in the main brought about, like the Revolution itself, by the same forces that have caused, for example, the crisis in Germany or the crisis in Austria.

No country in Europe is capable of complete economic independence. In spite of her huge variety of natural resources, the Russian organism seemed in 1914 to have been built up on the generous assumption that with Europe at least the country was to be permanently at peace, or at the most to engage in military squabbles which could be reckoned in months and would keep up the prestige of the autocracy without seriously hampering imports and exports. Almost every country in Europe, with the exception of England, was better fitted to stand alone, was less completely specialized in a single branch of production. England, fortunately for herself, was not isolated during the war, and will not become isolated unless the development of the crisis abroad deprives her of her markets. England produces practically no food, but great quantities of coal, steel, and manufactured goods. Isolate her absolutely, and she will not only starve but will stop producing manufactured goods, steel, and coal, because those who usually produce these things will be getting nothing for their labor except money which they will be unable to use to buy dinners, because there will be no dinners to buy.

The War a Blockade.

This supposed case is a precise parallel to what has happened in Russia. Russia produced practically no manufactured goods (70% of her machinery she received from abroad) but great quantities of food. The blockade isolated her. By the blockade I do not mean merely the childish stupidity committed by ourselves, but the blockade, steadily increasing

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

strictness, which began in August, 1914, and has been unnecessarily prolonged by our stupidity. The war, even while, for Russia, was not normally a blockade, was so actually. The use of tonnage was perforce restricted to the transport of the necessities of war, and these were narrowly defined as shells, guns, and so on, things which do not tend to improve a country economically, but rather the reverse. The imports from Sweden through Finland were no sort of make – weight for the loss of Poland and Germany.

The war meant that Russia's ordinary imports practically ceased. It meant a strain on Russia comparable with that which would have been put on England if the German submarine campaign had succeeded in putting an end to our imports of food from the Americas. From the moment of the Declaration of War, Russia was in the position of one "holding out," of a city standing at siege without a water supply, for her imports were so necessary to her economy that they may justly be considered as essential irrigation. There can be no question for her of improvement, of strengthening. She was faced with the fact that until the war should end she had to do with what she had, and that the things that she had formerly counted on importing would be replaced by guns and shells, to be used, as it turned out, in battering Russian property that happened to be in enemy hands. She even learned that she had to develop gun – making and shell – making at home, at the expense of those other industries which to some small extent might have helped her to keep going. And just as in England such a state of affairs would lead to a cessation of the output of iron and coal in which England is rich, so in Russia, in spite of corn lands, it led to a shortage of food.

The Russian peasant formerly produced food for which he was paid in money. With that money that formerly he was able to clothe himself, to buy the tools of his labor, and further, though no doubt he never observed the fact, to pay for the engines and wagons that took his food to market. A huge percentage of the clothes and the tools and the engines and the wagons and the rails came from abroad, and even those factories in Russia which were capable of producing such things, were in many essentials, themselves dependent upon imports. Russian towns began to be hungry in 1915. In October of that year the Empress reported to the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Emperor that the shrewd Rasputin had seen in a vision that it was necessary to bring wagons with flour, butter and sugar from Siberia and proposed that for three days nothing else should be done. Then there would be no strikes. In 1916 the peasants were burying their bread instead of bringing it to market. In the autumn of 1916 I remember telling certain most incredulous members of the English Government that there would be a most serious food shortage in Russia in the near future. In 1917 came the upheaval of the Revolution, in 1918 peace, but for Russia civil war and the continuance of the blockade. By July 1919, the rarity of manufactured goods was such that it was possible 200 miles south of Moscow to obtain 10 eggs for a box of matches, and the rarity of goods requiring distant transport became such that in November, 1919, in Western Russia the peasants would sell me nothing for money, whereas my neighbor in the train bought all he wanted in exchange for small quantities of salt.

Transport.

It was not even as if in vital matters Russia started the war in a satisfactory condition. The most vital of all questions in a country of huge distances must necessarily be that of transport. It is no exaggeration to say that only by fantastic efforts was Russian transport able to save its face and cover its worse deficiencies even before the war began. The extra strain put upon it by the transport of troops and the maintenance of the armies exposed its weakness, and with each succeeding week of war although in 1916 and 1917 Russia did receive 775 locomotives from abroad, Russian transport went from bad to worse, making it inevitable creeping paralysis of Russian economic life, during the latter already acute stages of which the revolutionaries succeeded to the disease that have crippled their precursors.

In 1914 Russia had in all 20,057 locomotives, of which 15,047 burnt coal, 4072 burnt oil, and 938 wood. But that figure of 20,000 was more impressive for a Government officials who had his own reasons for desiring to be impressed than for a practical railway engineer, since of that number over 5000 engines were more than 20 years old, over 2000 were more than 30 years old, 1500 were more than 40 years old, and 147

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

patriarchs have passed their 50th birthday. Of the whole 20,000 and only 7108 were under 10 years of age. That was six years ago. In the meantime Russia has been able to make in quantities decreasing during the last five years by 40 and 50% annually 2990 new locomotives. In 1914, of the locomotives then in Russia about 17,000 were in working condition. In 1915 there were, in spite of 800 new ones, only 16,500. In 1916 the number of healthy locomotives was slightly higher, owing partially to the manufacture of 903 at home and partially to the arrival of 400 from abroad. In 1917, in spite of the arrival of a further small contingent, the number sank to between 15,000 and 16,000. Early in 1918 the Germans in the Ukraine and elsewhere captured 3000. Others were lost in the early stages of the Civil War. The number of locomotives fell from 14,519 in January to 8467 in April, after which the artificially instigated revolt of the Czechoslovak's made possible the fostering of Civil War on a large scale, and the number fell swiftly to 4679 in December.

The Present Position.

In 1919 the numbers varied less markedly, but the decline continued, and in December last year 4141 engines were in working order. In January this year the number was 3969 rising slightly in February, when the number was 4019. A calculation was made before the war that in the best possible conditions the maximum Russian output of engines would be not more than 1800 annually. At this rate, in 10 years the Russians could restore their collection of engines to something like adequate numbers. Today 30 years would be an inadequate estimate, for some factories, like the Votkiusky, have been purposely ruined by the Whites; in others the lathes and other machinery for building and repairing locomotives are worn out, many of the skilled engineers were killed in the war with Germany, many others in defending the Revolution, and it will be long before it will be possible to restore to the workmen or to the factories the favorable material conditions of 1912 -13.

Thus the main factor in the present crisis is that Russia possesses 1/5 of the number of locomotives which in 1914 was just sufficient to maintain a railway system in the state of efficiency which to English

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

observers at that time was a joke. For six years she has been unable to import the necessary machinery for making engines or repairing them. Further, coal and oil have been until recently cut off by the Civil War. The coal mines are left, after the Civil War, in such a condition that no considerable output may be expected from them in the near future. Thus even those engines which exist have had their efficiency lessened by being adapted in a rough – and – ready manner for burning wood fuel instead of that for which they were designed.

Let us now examine the combined effect of ruined transport and the six years blockade on Russian life in town & country. First of all was cut off the import of manufactured goods from abroad. That has had a cumulative effect completed, as it were, and rounded off by the breakdown of transport. By making it impossible to bring food, fuel, and raw material to the factories the wreck of transport makes it impossible for Russian industry to produce even that modicum which it contributed to the general supply of manufactured goods which the Russian peasant was accustomed to receive in exchange for his production of food. On the whole the peasant himself eats rather more than he did before the war. But he has no matches, no salt, no clothes, no boots, no tools. The Communist are trying to put an end to the illiteracy in Russia, and in the villages the most frequent excuse for keeping children from school is a request to come and see them, when they will be found, as I have seen them myself, playing naked about the stove, without boots or anything but a shirt, if that, in which to go and learn to read and write.

Lack of Tools.

Clothes and such things as matches are, however, of less vital importance than tools, the lack of which is steadily reducing Russia's actual power of food production. Before the war Russia needed from abroad huge quantities of agricultural implements, not only machines but simple things like axes, sickles, scythes. In 1915 her own production of these things had fallen to 15.1% of her already inadequate peace – time output. In 1917 it had fallen to 2.1%. The Soviet Government is making efforts to raise it, and is planning new factories exclusively for the making of these things. What, with transport in such a condition, a

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

new factory means merely a new demand for material and food which there are neither engines nor wagons to bring. Meanwhile, all over Russia, spades are worn out, men are plowing with staves instead of with plowshares, scratching the surface of the ground, and, instead of harrowing with the steel spiked harrow of some weight, are brushing the ground with light constructions of wooden spikes bound together with wattles.

The actual agricultural productive powers of Russia are consequently sinking. But things are no better if we turn from the rye and corn lands to the forest. Saws are worn out. Axes are worn out. Even apart from that, the shortage of transport affects the production of wood fuel, lack of which reacts on transport and on the factories and so on in a circle from which nothing but a large import of engines and wagons will provide an outlet. Timber can be floated down the rivers. Yes, but it must be brought to the rivers. Surely horses can do that. Yes, but horses must be fed and oats do not grow in the forests. For example, this spring the best organized timber production was in Perm government. There 16,000 horses have been mobilized for the work, but further development is impossible for lack of forage. A telegram bitterly reports: "Two trains of oats from Ekaterinburg are expected day to day. If the oats arrive in time a considerable success will be possible." And if the oats do not arrive in time? Besides, not horses alone require to be fed. The men who cut the wood cannot do it on empty stomachs. And again rises a cry for trains that do not arrive, for food that exists somewhere but not in the forest where men work.

The general effect of the wreck of transport on food is stated as follows. Less than 12% of the oats required, less than 5% of the bread and salt required for really efficient working, were brought to the forest. Nonetheless three times as much wood has been prepared as the available transport has removed.

Effect on the Towns.

The towns suffer from lack of transport, and from the combined effect on the country of their productive weakness and of the loss of their

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

position as old centers through which the country received its imports from abroad. Townsfolk and factory workers lack food, fuel, raw materials, and much else that in a civilized State is considered a necessary of life. Thus, 10 million pounds of fish were caught last year but there were no means of bringing them from the fisheries to the great industrial centers where they were most needed. Townsfolk are starving and, in winter, cold. People living in rooms in a flat, complete strangers to each other, by general agreement bring all their beds into the kitchen. In the kitchen soup is made once a day. There is little warmth there besides the natural warmth of several human beings in the small room. There it is possible to sleep. During the whole of last winter, in the case I have in mind, one of thousands, there were no means of heating the other rooms, where the temperature was almost always far below freezing – point. It is difficult to make the conditions real except by individual examples.

The lack of medicines, due directly to the blockade, seems to have small effect on the imagination when simply stated as such. Perhaps people will realize what it means when instead of talking of the wounded undergoing operations without anesthetics I recorded the case of an acquaintance, a Bolshevik, working in the Government office, who suffered last summer from a slight derangement of the stomach due to improper and inadequate feeding. His doctor prescribed a medicine, and nearly a dozen different apothecaries were unable to make up the prescription for lack of one or several of the simple ingredients required. Soap has become an article so rare (in Russia as in Germany during the blockade and the war there is a terrible absence of fats) that for the present it is to be treated as a means of safeguarding labor, to be given to the workmen for washing after and during their work, and (by preference) to minors, chemical, medical, and sanitary workers, for whose efficiency and health it is essential.

The efficient washing of under – clothes is impossible. To induce the population of Moscow to go to the bathes during the typhus epidemic, it was a sufficient bribe to promise to each person besides the free bath a free scrap of soap. Houses are falling into disrepair for want of plaster, paint, and tools. Nor is it possible to substitute one thing for another, for

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Russia's industries all suffer alike from their old dependence on the West, as well as from the inadequacy of the transport to bring to the factories the material they need. People remind each other that during the war the Germans, when similarly hard put to it for clothes made paper dresses, table – cloths, etc. In Russia the nets used in paper – making are worn out. At last, in April, 1920 (so Lenin tells me), there seems to be a hope of getting new ones from abroad. But the condition of the paper industry is typical of all, in a country which, it should not be forgotten, could be in a position to supply wood pulp for other countries besides itself. The paper mills are able to produce only 60% of demands that have previously by the strictest scrutiny been reduced to a minimum before they are made. The reasons, apart from the lack of nets and cloths, are summed up in absence of food, forage, and labor. Even when wood is brought by river the trouble is not yet overcome. The horses are dead and eaten or starved and weak. Work has to stop so that the workmen, themselves underfed can drag the wood from the barges to the mills. It may well be imagined what the effect of hunger, cold, and the disheartenment consequent on such conditions of work and on the seeming hopelessness of the position has on the productivity of labor, the fall in which reacts on all the industries, on transport, on the general situation, and so again on itself.

MG. August 13, 1920.

**Town V. Countryside.
A Fateful Economic Struggle In Russia**

Reval, June 10.

Just as the economic crisis, due in the first instance to the war and the isolation it imposed, has gone farther in Russia than elsewhere, so the shortage of labor, at present a handicap, and annoyance in more fortunate countries, is in Russia perhaps the greatest of the national dangers. Shortage of labor cannot be measured simply by the decreasing numbers of the workmen. If it takes two workmen as long to do a particular job in 1920 as it took one man to do it in 1914, then, even if

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the number of workmen has remained the same, the actual supply of labor has been halved. And in Russia this situation is worse than that.

For example, in the group of State metalworking factories, those, in fact, which may be considered as the weapon with which Russia is trying to cut her way out of transport difficulties, apart from the fact that there were in 1916 81,600 workmen, whereas in 1920 there are only 42,500, labor has deteriorated in the most appalling manner. In 1916 in these factories 92% of the nominal working hours were actually kept; in 1920 work goes on during only 60% of the nominal hours. It is estimated that the labor of a single workman produces now only one quarter of what it produced in 1916. To take another example, also from workmen engaged in transport: that is to say, in the most important of all work at the present time: – In the Moscow Junction of the Moscow – Kazan Railway, between November 1 and February 29, 292 workmen and clerks missed 12,048 working days, being absent on an average 40 days per man in the four months. In Moscow passenger station on this line 22 workmen missed in November hundred and six days, in December 273, in January 338, and February 380, in an appalling crescendo, further illustrated by the wagon department, where 28 workmen missed in November 104 days and in February 500. In November workmen absented themselves for single days. In February the same workmen were absent for the greater part of the month.

The invariable excuse was illness. Many cases of illness there undoubtedly were, since this period was the worst of the typhus epidemic; but besides illness and mere obvious idleness, which no doubt accounts for a certain proportion of illegitimate holidays, there is another explanation which goes near the root of the matter. Much of the time filched from the State was in all probability spent in expeditions in search of food. In Petrograd the Council of Public Economy complain that there is a tendency to turn the eight – hour day into a four -hour day. Attempts are being made to arrest this tendency by making an additional food allowance conditional on the actual fulfillment of working days. In the Donetz coal basin the monthly output per man was in 1914 759 poods, in 1916 615 poods, in 1919 240 poods (figure taken from

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Ekaterinslov government), and in 1920 the output per man is estimated at being something near 220 poods.

"Sundaying" for Cigarette Papers.

Something, no doubt, is due to the natural character of the Russians, which led Trotsky to define man as an animal distinguished by laziness. Russians are lazy, and probably owe to their climate the remarkable incapacity for prolonged effort. The Russian climate is such that over large areas of Russia the Russian peasant is accustomed, and has been accustomed for hundreds of years, to perform prodigies of labor during the two short periods of sowing and harvest, and to spend the immensely long and monotonous winter in a hibernation like that of the snake or the dormouse. There is much greater difference between a Russian workman's normal output and that of which he is capable for a short time if he sets himself to it than there is between the normal and exceptional output of an Englishman, whose temperate climate has not taught him to regard a great part of the year as a period of waiting for and resting from the extraordinary effort of a few weeks. *

[*Note: Given any particular motive, any particular enthusiasm, or visible, desirable object, even the hungry Russian workmen of today are capable of sudden and temporary increase of output. The "Saturdayings" of which I have written in a previous article provided endless illustrations of this. They had something the character of a picnic, they were novel, they were out of the routine, and the productivity of labor during a "Saturdaying" was invariably higher than on a weekday. For example, there's a shortage of paper for cigarettes. People rolled cigarettes in old newspapers. It occurred to the Central Committee of the Paper – makers Union to organize a "Sundaying" with the object of sending cigarette paper to the soldiers in the Red Army. Six factories took part. Here is a table showing the output of these factories during that "Sundaying" and the average weekday output (the figures are in poods"; –

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Factory Made on Sunday Average weekday output.

Krasnogorodskaya	615	450
Giaznovskaya	65	45
Medianskaya	105	90
Dobruzhskaya	286	250
Belgiiskaya	127	85
Robshinskaya	87	55]

Turning from the question of low productivity per man to that of the absolute shortage of men, the example given at the beginning of this article, showing that in the most important group of factories the number of workmen has fallen 50%, is by no means exceptional. Walking through the passages of what used to be the Club of the Nobles and is now the House of the Trade Unions during the recent Trade Unions Congress in Moscow, I observed among a number of pictorial diagrams on the walls one in particular illustrating the rise and fall of the working population of Moscow during a number of years. Each year was represented by the picture of a factory with a chimney which rose and fell with the population. From that diagram I took the figures for 1913, 1918, and 1919. Those figures should be constantly borne in mind by anyone who wishes to realize how catastrophic the shortage of labor in Russia actually is and to judge how sweeping may be the changes in the social configuration of the country if that shortage continues to increase it here are the figures: –

Workmen in Moscow in 1913..... 159,344
Workmen in Moscow in 1918..... 157,282
Workmen. In Moscow in 1919..... 105,210

That is to say that one-third of the workmen of Moscow ceased to live there or ceased to be workmen in the course of a single year. A similar phenomenon is observable in each one of the big industrial districts.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

What has become of those workmen?

A partial explanation is obvious. The main impulse of the Revolution came from the town workers. Of these, the metal – workers were the most decided, and those who most freely joined the Red Guard in the early, and the Red Army in the later days of the Revolution. Many workmen, in those early days when there was more enthusiasm than discipline, when there were hardly any experienced officers, and those without much authority, were slaughtered during the German advances of 1918. The first mobilizations, when conscription was introduced, were among the workers in the great industrial districts. The troops from Petrograd and Moscow, exclusively workmen's regiments, have suffered more than any others during the Civil War, being the most dependable and being thrown, like the Guards of all time, into the worst place of any serious crisis.

But these explanations are only partial. The more general answer to the question, what has become of the workmen? Lies in the very economic crisis which the absence accentuates.

The Workman Turned Parasite.

Russia is unlike England, where starvation of the towns would be practically starvation of the whole island. In Russia if a man is hungry he has only to walk far enough and he will come to a place where there is plenty to eat. Almost every Russian workman retains in some form or other connection with the village, where, if he returns, he will not be an entire stranger, but at worst a poor relation and quite possibly an honored guest. It is not surprising that many thousands have "returned to the land" in this way. Further, if a workman retains his connection both with a distant village and with the town he can keep himself and his family fat and prosperous by ceasing to be a workman and, instead, traveling to the village on the buffers or the roof of a railway wagon, and bringing back with him sacks of flour and potatoes for sale in the town at fantastic prices. Thereby he is lost to productive labor, and his uncomfortable but adventurous life becomes directly harmful, tending to

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

increase the strain on transport, since it is obviously more economical to transport 1000 sacks than to transport 1000 sacks with an idle workmen attached to each site.

Further, his activities actually make it more difficult for the town population to get food. By keeping open for the village the possibility of selling at fantastic prices he lessens the readiness of the peasants to part with the flour at the lower prices of the Government. Nor is it as if his activities benefited the working population. The food he brings in goes for the most part to those who have plenty of money or have things to exchange for it. And honest men in Russia today have not much money, and those who have things to exchange are not as a rule workmen. The theory of this man's harmfulness is, I know, open to argument, but the practice at least it exactly as I stated it and is obviously attractive to the individual who prefers adventure on a full stomach to useful work on an empty .Setting aside the theory, with its latent quarrel between free trade and State control, we can still recognize that each workman engaged in these pursuits has become an unproductive middleman, one that very parasitic species which the revolutionaries had hoped to make unnecessary. It is bad from the revolutionary point of view of a workman is so-employed, but it is no less bad from the point of view of people who do not care two pence about the Revolution one way or the other, but do care about getting Russia on her feet again and out of her economic crisis. It is bad enough if an unskilled workman is so employed. It is far worse if a skilled workman finds he can do better for himself as a "food speculator" than by the exercise of his legitimate craft.

The Fundamental Problem.

And with that we come to the general changes in the social geography of Russia which are threatened if the process is now at work continue unchecked. The relations between town and village are the fundamental problems of the Revolution. Town and country-side are in sharp contradiction, daily intensified by the inability of the towns to supply the country's needs. The town may be considered as a single productive organism, with feelers stretching into the country and actual outpost

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

there in the form of agricultural enterprises taking their directives from the center and working as definite parts of the State organism. All around this town organism, in all its interstices, it, too, with its feelers in this form of "food speculators," is the anarchic chaos of the country, consisting of a myriad of independent units, regulated by no plan, without a brain center of any kind. Either the organized town will hold its own against and gradually dominate and systematize the country chaos, or that chaos little by little will engulf the organism of the town. Every workman who leaves this town automatically places himself on the side of the country in that struggle. And when a town like Moscow loses a third of its working population in a year, it is impossible not to see that, so far, the struggle is going in favor of that huge, chaotic, unconscious, but immensely powerful countryside.

There is even a danger that the town may become divided against itself. Just as scarcity in food leads to food speculation, so the shortage of labor is making possible a sort of speculation in labor. The urgent need of labor has led to a resurrection of the methods of direct recruiting of workmen in the villages by the agents of particular factories, who by promising exceptional terms succeed in getting workmen where the Government organs fail. And of course this recruiting is not confined to the villages. Those enterprises which are situated in the corn districts are naturally able to offer better conditions, for the sake of which workmen are ready to leave their jobs, and skilled workmen to do unskilled work and the result can only be a drainage of good workmen away from the hungry central industrial districts where they are most of all the needed.

Will the Country Conqueror the Town?

Russia, in these circumstances, may sink into something very like barbarism, for with the decay of the economic importance of the towns would decay also their authority, and freebooting on a small and large scale would become profitable and not very dangerous. It would be possible, no doubt, for foreigners to trade with the Russians, as with the natives of the Cannibal Islands, bartering looking- glasses and cheap tools, but, should such a state of things come to be it would be long

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

years of colonization, with all the new possibilities and risks involved in the subjugation of a free people, before Western Europe could count once more on getting a considerable portion of its food from Russian corn lands.

That is the position, those the natural tendencies at work. Opposed to these tendencies are the united efforts of the Communist and of those, leaving the question of Communism discreetly aside, work with them for the sake of preventing such collapse of Russian civilization. They recognize the existence of every one of the tendencies I have described, but they are convinced that every one of these tendencies will be arrested. They believe that the country will not conquer the town, or the reverse. So far from expecting the unproductive stagnation described in the last paragraph, they think of Russia as the natural food supply of Europe, which the Communist among them believe will be in course of time be made up of "Working Men's Republics" (though, for the sake of their own Republic, they are not inclined to postpone trade with Europe until that epic arrives). At the very time when spades and sickles are wearing out or worn out, these men are determined that the food output of Russia should sooner or later be increased by the introduction of better methods of agriculture and farming on a large scale. We are witnessing in Russia the first stages of a Titanic struggle, with one side all the forces of nature leading apparently to an inevitable collapse of civilization, and on the other side nothing but the incalculable force of human will.

MG. August 18, 1920.

At Minsk

Bolshevik Policy Outlined.

"Open Negotiations And No Dictation."

Minsk, Monday.

I arrived this morning at Minsk, where I expected to find the armistice negotiations in progress, after a much – delayed opening yesterday. To

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

my surprise the Polish Delegation have still not arrived. It is reported that they met with a motor – car accident before reaching the Red lines. They are due definitely tonight, however. There is a huge party of 82 members, including 20 Polish, English, French, and American journalist.

I traveled from Moscow by ordinary third-class railway car for two nights and one day, and have seen a great deal of how the Russians travel, how they feed, and of what they talk among themselves. The most startling revelation is their cheerfulness under a most depressing strain. Black bread and a tea substitute made of dried carrots, and taken mostly without sugar, they consume with appetite and enjoyment. The most primitive comforts are absent, but there is an astonishing vitality and not a trace of self – pity among the population.

As I reported in my previous message, people of leading position with whom I came into touch in Moscow earnestly protest that the Soviet Government has no intention of pressing for revolution in Poland. That declaration I have heard repeated today here by Danishevsky, chairman of the Russian Peace Delegation. "My opening speech tomorrow at the first meeting of the Peace Conference," he said, "as well as the opening paragraph of the terms, will put it absolutely beyond discussion. There will be full recognition of Polish independence and sovereignty. We will make clear beyond shadow of doubt that we do not intend to interfere in Polish internal affairs or to dictate their form of government."

Arms for Polish Workers.

"Are not your demands for the arming of the workers likely to be interpreted as interference in internal affairs tending to revolutionize Poland and dictating the form of government?" I asked.

"By no means," said Danishevsky . "It means and actually is a concession, not an interference. We have two alternatives: disarm Poland or leave arms in the hands of the workers, who we may trust will never use them against Russia. We do not create a class force, and

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

propose nothing but a workers militia. As a matter of fact, our proposal increases, not diminishes, the armed forces of Poland."

"But in your terms you exclude agricultural workers and leave arms to town industrial workers only," I pointed out.

Danishovsky replied, "We are ready to listen to the Polish delegates. We are sincerely determined that this conference should lead to peace. There's not going to be any dictation, and no condition is meant as an ultimatum."

Ask which of the terms were considered crucial, Danishovsky said: "It is difficult to define. Our only aim is to secure our own safety from Polish aggression. I don't think any particular point in the terms is crucial. I hope all the terms may give the desired security."

I asked how he justified the demand in the terms for the distribution of land among the victims of the Polish war. He said he did not anticipate opposition. "In England such a demand will certainly be considered fair. As to France," added Danishovsky, laughing, "her ministers not long ago advised Wrangel to do the same in the Crimea."

"A Very Liberal Compromise."

Questioned about the meaning of the "corridor door," whether political, strategical, or economic, he said: "Purely economic. All the talk about our desire to secure a way for our army west is nonsense. Look at the map. The proposed corridor connects us only with East Prussia, which is cut off from the rest of Germany by the Polish corridor. That is so narrow that it would be, off the first day of war. The corridor is simply a compromise with the Curzon line, which is assigning Poland three provinces predominately Russian –Bielostok with 34%, Sokolka 0.8%, and Bielsk with 33% of Poles. It is economically the most important Russian railway on Russian territory, which we are determined to keep. Our proposal is a very liberal compromise, and is exposed to odium only because unfortunately reminding people of the Versailles Peace. The negotiations will certainly be open, the Polish Delegation possessing their own wireless station."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The chairman of the Russian Peace Delegation – as do other members of the Russian Government – impresses one by sincere desire for peace. It is quite likely that the Polish Delegation – despite the so far unexplained delays which are suggesting ill-will – may as sincerely desire to come to an agreement. Yet the near future is obscured, and may bring forth a revolution on Poland's borders, and obviously Poland itself has gone too far. The landless peasantry are taking over land left behind by runaway landowners. If peace is restored the Poles may start recovering land from the peasants and take away all that the people have gained during the last revolutionary weeks – a process which will be considered by the masses as a counter revolution and easily lead to a civil war.

Delayed Negotiations.

Russian Charges Against The Poles.

Moscow, Friday (By Wireless, Received Yesterday Morning)

After a 20 hours railway journey from the Latvian frontier, I arrived at Moscow this morning. The trains are running faster, the stations are conducted in a more disciplined and businesslike way, and the railway system generally has greatly improved since I left Russia four months ago. I hear that the transport service has improved all over Russia.

Quite likely it was never as bad as was generally supposed. It is a part of the Bolshevik method to exaggerate rather than minimize dangers. The Poles probably calculated upon the collapse of the Russian railways to prevent the Bolsheviks sending troops to the front, but the railways not only stood the strain but undertook at the same time the work of repatriating Lettish citizens and Russian prisoners from Germany.

On my way here I saw train loads of Letts all people born in Latvia who, according to the peace treaty with Latvia had claimed repatriation. Near Moscow I met a sanitary train decorated with evergreens taking home Russian prisoners from Germany.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

In addition I hear that the ordinary passenger traffic in Russia has been doubled. Russia remains a mystery defying calculation. It is most alive when everyone is sure it is dead.

Responsibility for Delays.

My first visit was to the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, to get passports to travel to Minsk. I saw Chitcherin's under secretary, Karachan, and questioned him about the cause of the protracted negotiations preliminary to the armistice negotiations proper.

He insisted that the Bolsheviks had done everything to bring about an armistice and peace, and that Poland had been delaying matters hoping that the Bolshevik invasion of Poland would decide the question of the Entente's action in favor of Poland. He accused the Poles of deliberately sending the first delegation without proper credentials. The Poles then refused the Russian suggestion that they should communicate with Warsaw by wireless, and returned home. Then followed five days of mysterious silence and inability to receive or send wireless messages. The result of this was further Red successes and then agitation all over the world about the alleged intentions of Russia to annihilate the independence of Poland.

When silence became no longer possible the Polish delegation succeeded in avoiding finding their way through the Bolshevik lines. The Bolshevik say: "At last we conquered the Polish peace delegation when we captured Seidlitz."

MG. August 23, 1920.

Poles Repudiate Responsibility For Delay.

Bolshevik Objection To Uncontrolled Wireless Facilities.

Minsk, Thursday.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The center of interest at the second sitting of the Conference, held today, was the protest of the Russian delegation against the alleged prolongation of the negotiations by the Polish delegation, citing a long list of systematic delays, beginning with the departure from Baranovitchi on August 2, the break which followed, and the avoidance of appointments that delayed the Conference from the ninth till the 16th. Yet the Russian delegation declared themselves most unpleasantly impressed by the spirit of procrastination manifested at the Conference itself, complaining especially of the postponing of the second meeting for the day without adequate reason. The protest concluded: – "The Russo-Ukrainian delegation protest energetically against the policy of delays, and puts all responsibility for the continuation of bloodshed on the Polish Government."

Answering the protest the President of the Polish delegation repudiated responsibility for delaying the Conference, and explained that the postponement of today's sitting was due to the late reception of the Polish translation of the Russian declaration. He promised to lay on the table of the Conference evidence proving that the Polish Government were not responsible for delaying the Conference, and asked for more facilities to communicate with the Polish Government by their own radio station.

Military Objection to Uncontrolled Messages.

The latter point touches a most delicate problem – the permission of uncontrolled communications by an enemy delegation within the war zone, while a severe, probably decisive battle is proceeding. The delicate nature of the problem is augmented in this case where the composition of the Polish peace delegation, which unmistakably comprises officers of the Polish Military Intelligence Department, several members of the technical staff, and Staff General Listorsky, well known for his former activities in the Secret Service. The Russian military authorities are suspicious of the sincerity of the Polish peace delegation and refused to guarantee the uncontrolled use of separate

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

wireless. In these circumstances the Russian delegation is proposing to use the Moscow Government wireless.

I well remember similar difficulties during the Russo-Esthonian negotiations at the Dorpat, when the Esthonian authorities refused permission for the establishment of a direct telegraph line to Moscow before the Armistice was signed. However, it hampered negotiations but little because the Russian delegation, being plenipotentiaries, referred to their Government only the most important questions, while the Polish delegation is evidently not plenipotentiary. It is almost expected here that it is instructed to protract the negotiations by referring the smallest things to the Polish Government. The most striking instance alleged is the refusal to enter into immediate discussion of the terms of armistice and preliminary peace without applying to the Warsaw Government, which means a delay of at least three or four days. The Russians interpret the tactics of the Poles as a game played for time whilst the Polish military authorities prepare a counter – offensive.

Bolshevik Threats.

"If they ignore the chance given them at Minsk," said to me today one of the most intelligent leaders of Bolshevik Russia who is just returned from a trip to the occupied part of Poland, "and try once more the luck of war, they will be working for us. It is quite possible to collect forces at one point and achieve a local success on the enormously long frontier, but it will permit, nay, more, it will compel us to deliver a counter-blow, and we have not the slightest doubt of its effect. It is, however, not simply a military mistake the Poles are committing: it is a still greater political mistake. If the Conference be once broken up, before it can reassemble the revolution now beginning in Poland will be victorious. Already they are fighting in an atmosphere of revolution. The followers of Koltchak, Denikin and Yudenvitch will know what it means. Indeed, we are bringing revolutionary freedom, security, and hope to the masses, driving out the land owners, and giving land to the peasants. The returning Poles bring pogroms in their train, deprive the peasants of the land received from the Revolution, and bring back the hated landowner. Time, as well as the Polish mistakes, are working for us."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The Bolsheviks' Propaganda.

All we have seen here, all we have learned from the people coming from the parts of Lithuania and Poland occupied lately by the Bolsheviks confirms the view that Bolshevik statesmanship has been received everywhere surprisingly well. After being in Minsk for several days I have been surprised at finding (so little?) difference between this town under the Bolsheviks and other provincial Lithuanian and Polish towns. All the shops are open, trade is unhampered, there is very little requisitioning, and everything is well paid for. The only real difference is the uniform of the Red Army and the numerous signboards of Soviet offices. It must be only temporary, but all the same it is affecting the population very favorably as a contrast to all the wild stories they have been told to expect of Bolshevism during two years of anti-- Bolshevik propaganda.

A Contrast In Clothes.

Martial Splendor Of The Poles.

Minsk, Tuesday (via Moscow by Wireless Received Yesterday).

The first meeting of the Russo-Polish Peace Conference took place tonight at a local girls school in a back street at Minsk the walls of the little recreation hall freshly decorated with numerous big and small red stars each having inside the Soviet arms (a golden hammer and sickle), the usual school pictures and portraits of Turgenev, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Gorky, besides three large crimson Futurist eruptions pretending to represent pictures of Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky.

The delegations were placed at a long table. The Russians were easily accommodated on one side of the table in one row; the numerous Polish delegates filled two rows on the other side. Journalist, stenographers, and interpreters sat at small tables behind the delegates in the corner of the room.

The arrival of the Polish Delegation provided the only dramatic moment of today's conference. They were 35 men, obviously belonging to the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

bourgeois middle-class; a general and his staff of 10 officers in splendid uniforms of crimson, blue, and gold, with silver – edged high, stiff collars and decorations, reminding one of the Prussian officers in their Imperial splendor. They created a striking contrast to the Russian delegates in worn-out, simple – too simple – clothes and the young Red officers with a mere suggestion of officers attire.

Polish Statement.

The Moscow wireless reports that the second session of the conference of the Russo-Polish Peace Delegations took place at Minsk on August 19. The head of the Polish Delegation read the text of the Polish Declaration the fundamentals of which are as follows: –

The Polish Delegation had arrived in Minsk to establish the conditions for an armistice and a preliminary peace. Poland did not desire war. The Polish troops have occupied territory, which had once belonged to Poland, merely to attain the free decision of the people's themselves as to their fate. On entering Vilna, Pilsudski published a declaration, proposing that the population of the former Lithuanian Principality should decide their own fate. Dvinsk and Latgalia were left to Latvia. Russia was trying by force to set up a Soviet regime in Poland.

The Polish peace conditions were as follows: – the complete and inviolable independence of the Polish Republic, with no interference in its internal affairs.

Danishevsky, the head of the Russian Delegation, proposed to fix the basis for the work of the Peace Conference.

[Then follow the 15 points of the Russian terms, published yesterday.]

Danishevsky declared that the Ukraine is an independent republic, in alliance with Soviet Russia, and, therefore, he proposed to the Polish Delegation to obtain a supplementary mandate from its Government, authorizing it to conduct peace negotiations with the Ukraine.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. August 25, 1920.

Polish Conduct In Negotiations. Bolshevik Suspicions.

Minsk, Saturday

The center of gravity has once more shifted to the fighting front. The peace negotiations are actually suspended until a final decision has been reached on the front. In the meantime the peaceful atmosphere of Minsk is troubled by the protest of the Polish Delegation of unfair treatment and by their threats to leave Minsk. The facts are briefly as follows. It has been already reported that the Russians permitted the Poles to use their own radio station for direct communications to Warsaw, but the agreement was restricted to the use of the station during four hours of the day and two hours at night, two days being reserved exclusively for transmitting their own messages and receiving messages addressed to them, while they were strictly forbidden to intercept messages not addressed to the Polish Delegation.

Despite this agreement the Polish operators use the station for purposes beyond the agreement, until the Russian military sealed the station and permitted Polish operators to act only during the agreed four hours. Yesterday a Polish operator broke off the seal and started to communicate with Budapest, leaving the station only when the sentry threaten to shoot.

This incident greatly excited the Russian Delegation, who may be driven by the events of the last three weeks to give up the idea of the possibility of a negotiated peace with Poland and be converted to the view of those who believe in the dictated peace. Yet the Poles complain of the attitude towards them as worse than the Allies attitude towards the Germans at Versailles – a curious assumption indeed. The restriction at Versailles a year after the war was over was an added humiliation to the Germans, while here the Poles, were still actually enemies, were given facilities with a generous exemplary attitude. The restriction put on the use of the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

wireless is by no means intended to interfere with communications between the Delegation and the Polish Government, since the use of the Moscow and other Government wireless stations – in cipher or plain – ensures quick unlimited communications. What the Russians are resolved to prevent is the Polish officers interception of Russian military communications flashed between battlefield wireless stations. The fairness of such restrictions is obvious, while the Polish protraction of the negotiations, their overbearing attitude, and the infinite complaints – such as those on the temporary stoppage of water and on the attempts at Red propaganda by the commandant of the place – are tending to increase the suspicion that the Poles, intoxicated by temporary success on a part of the front, are provoking a break-up of the negotiations.

It is Saturday afternoon, the hour for "Saturdaying" – cheerful work for the good of the Socialist fatherland. Groups of grown – up people, trade unions, Soviet officials, White Ruthenians, Russian Jews, young Communist, members of the political parties – some 3000 men, women, and children, – with red flags, music, dance, are marching in order past my hotel to Marx Square, formerly Governors Square, and from there to some other place to clean up the parts of the city burned by the Poles.

MG. August 25, 1920

Rejected Russian Terms.

Minsk, Monday (by Wireless).

The Polish reply to the Russian peace terms has just been presented. It amounts to a flat rejection. Out of 15 Russian demands only one, namely, demobilization, is accepted, and that only on the condition of mutuality – that is to say, if Russia demobilizes at the same time. Disarmament, the closing of the munitions industry, and the delivery of munitions to Russia are indignantly rejected. The Polish workers militia, as proposed by the Russians, the control by the Russians of the railway line Bielostok-Oraievo are declared to be beyond discussion.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The Curzon line is declared to be unacceptable, as involving a third partition of Poland. The distribution of land to Polish victims of the war, the re-evacuation of cattle and horses driven away by Polish landowners from White Ruthenia and Lithuania are rejected as an interference with internal affairs and a violation of Polish sovereignty. The other terms are rejected without qualification.

Poland demands a demarcation line raised on strategical considerations and the idea of buffer States

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

VOLUME III.

DISPATCHES FOR 1921.

MG. March 17, 1921.

**An Eye – Witness From Moscow And Petrograd.
Truth About The Kronstadt Revolt.
Insurgents In Control Of Big Guns And Baltic Fleet.
Supposed Street Fighters Fishing Under Walls Of Kremlin.
Unifying Effect Of White Intervention.**

Reval, Tuesday

I left Petrograd on Sunday, reaching Reval yesterday, after an entirely uneventful journey. Until I saw the foreign newspapers here I did not realize what immense significance is given abroad to the events which culminated in the Kronstadt mutiny.

These events have had three definite stages. Six weeks ago the factories were working better than for a long time. There was a better food allowance, and a better general atmosphere of hope and a feeling that the worst of what promised to be a difficult winter was already passed.

Then came the unexpected fuel crisis, following snowdrifts in Northern Ukraine, and the temporary stoppage of the Siberian Railway by the peasant revolt. The fuel shortage, due to these causes and (since there was actually more fuel this year than last) to the unduly optimistic distribution, brought the railways nearly to a standstill and caused the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

closing down of the bulk of the Petrograd factories, besides making necessary a reduction of food allowances. Even so, the conditions were better than a year ago, but hardship was more bitterly felt because of the preceding period when things had noticeably improved. This stage was marked by vociferous discontent in Moscow and Petrograd, where there were meetings in factories and strikes, but none of the bloody battles described abroad. Meanwhile, tremendous efforts were being made to deal with the fuel crisis, and towards the end of February the numbers of wagons reaching the cities were increasing every day.

The third stage begins with the Kronstadt mutiny. This at least temporarily quietened the internal discontents, because of its obvious connection with the forces outside Russia.

The Bolsheviks inside Russia and the Social Revolutionaries outside both attribute to the latter party a far greater share in the present crisis than actually belongs to them. Certainly the Social Revolutionaries were pursuing a policy of increasing Russia's economic difficulties by blowing up bridges and organizing peasant revolts. This is just like their old policy of throwing bombs at Tsars and thereby strengthening that part of the Government organization which was directed against themselves. But on the one hand the discontents would exist even if there were no Social Revolutionaries, and on the other the Social Revolutionaries are quite mistaken in their statements that the workmen in the factories and the Kronstadt mutineers are asking for a Constituent Assembly. These two words in any meeting bring either laughter or references to Koltchak, and even Social Revolutionary agitators talk not of that but of things nearer the actual point.

Revolt Tendencies to the Left.

It is significant that even in Kronstadt a leading article in the paper issued by the mutineers ends with the words "Long live Soviet Government." In Moscow the chief point of the discontents was a demand for the democratization of the food allowances. The workmen protested against the extra allowances being given to responsible officials, such as engineers. In Petrograd, they asked for the retirement

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of certain individual officials, and in some cases called for new elections. In the country the peasant movements, with which Social Revolutionaries abroad identify themselves, are far nearer Anarchist than Social Revolutionaries. In Ukraine, for example, the bands of Makhno and others, who occasionally hold up trains, do so with the simple object of acquiring the passenger's clothes; by no means with the object of demanding a Constituent Assembly. These are elements which would resist any Government whatsoever.

The market characteristic of every one of these various movements of discontent is that it tends to the Left rather than to the Right. The Kronstadt affair, though apparently in the later stages the wires were being cut by White officers, began by sailors dragging the officers out of the cabins and occupying them themselves. Nothing is more significant than the instantaneous effect of the appearance in Kronstadt of General Koslorsky and the publication of the fact that Trotsky, on seeing the revolt announced in a French paper 15 days before, had actually warned the people to expect something of the sort.

Fishing and Playing at Soldiers.

The danger of a new foreign front loomed up again and disputes and differences were once more laid temporarily aside, although vociferous enough immediately before. It could be remarked that during the loudest time of discontent the meetings, strikes, and disturbances that took place would not have filled a newspaper paragraph if they had occurred in any other country. Moscow for the last six weeks has been uniformly quiet; rather dull indeed. While newspapers abroad were describing battles in the streets I was watching a score of fishermen under the Kremlin walls fishing through holes in the ice in the immemorial way, in blissful ignorance of these mythical battles, and listening not to gunfire, but to the Moscow church bells. The only warlike occurrence was a Communist parade of men and women scouts in the Red Square, where they drilled and threw snowballs at each other.

The only noticeable change in Moscow during the last weeks, besides the melting snow, was the increase of street – corner trade in food after

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the reduction of the regular food allowance. Russian negotiations with various Eastern peoples went on just as usual, and Turks and Russians haggled obstinately over Batum without realizing in the least in what exciting times they were living.

The Communist Assembly.

That the discontents in town & country were not without real effect was shown at once by the whole tone of the 10th Assembly of the Communist Party. In the first place, instead of being lively and pugnacious, as had been expected, differences were waived with the object once more of presenting a united front. The discussion on trade unionism, which had set Trotsky against Lenin with Bucharin as a sort of buffer between them, died down like magic, and the actual dispute was limited to a very one-sided contest, in which Lenin trounced Mme. Kollontai and Shlapnikov choosing the wrong moment to make a dangerous kind of fuss.

Many local meetings and much press discussion had prepared the way for Lenin's speech, which sounded the trumpet call of retreat with regard to the peasants.

A considerable modification in policy has been announced. The tax in kind is to be substituted for the old methods of requisition, and the form of the tax recognizes disparity in property owning. Lenin admitted that the world – revolution was likely to be long in coming, and that it was difficult to carry out the full Communist program in a land of small bourgeois proprietors. A few of the more fanatic Communists complained that Lenin “was disheartening the world – revolution just at the moment when Allied pressure on Germany was making it likely,” but nobody paid much attention to them.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Trotsky's Report on Kronstadt.

The Conference proceeded peaceably through its discussions of questions of nationality and education until the third day, when, after Trotsky's return from Petrograd, it took privately various decisions with regard to the Kronstadt situation and the mobilization of a considerable number of its members and sending them to Petrograd. Trotsky had been at Oranienbaum and Krasnaya Gorka, and reported that the Kronstadt situation was serious; not because of any moral support Kronstadt was likely to get in Petrograd or Moscow – where the people have nothing to gain by disturbances – but simply because the mutineers are in possession of much heavier guns than those at the disposition of the Government, and consequently they are capable of doing an incredible damage to Petrograd.

Further, the mutineers are capable of departing and taking with them most of the valuable units of the Russian Baltic Fleet, and should it come to an artillery battle the strongest defenses of Petrograd, Kronstadt, and the shore batteries might mutually destroy each other.

It was decided to make every effort to liquidate the mutiny without damaging the ships or the forts. The first attempt of the loyal troops to approach Kronstadt over the ice was defeated by machine – gun fire from the forts, which also bombarded Oranienbaum, causing fires in the town. Part of the Petrograd fire brigade was mobilized and sent down to assist the local firemen.

Steps have been taken to guard against the possible landing of the mutineers. Considerable forces of troops have been concentrated on both sides of the Gulf of Finland. Tukhachevsky, who was largely responsible for the defeat of the White forces in the south, has been given chief command. With him are Varoshiloff, a Donetz workman, who shared with General Budenny the organization of the cavalry, and many others.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The State of Siege at Petrograd.

In the train in which I traveled up from Moscow were many young officers, promoted from the ranks, who have distinguished themselves in the civil war. Petrograd, of course, is in a state of siege. It is necessary to have a permit to be in the streets after nine in the evening. The town is not bombarded. Many runaway sailors from Kronstadt, and a few of the mutineers have made their way across the ice in the hopes of getting support from the Petrograd population. I myself talked to workmen who had seen the mutineers, and heard from them that the sailors boast that they have been sent tinned meats from abroad and allowed daily two tins each.

I heard three or four shells fired from Kronstadt on Sunday morning, but there were no replies. The Government has brought up heavy siege artillery from Smolensk for use in case all other means of liquidating the insurgent fails. Individuals have been seen going from Kronstadt to Finland and visa versa. Government airplanes make daily reconnaissance and drop proclamations. One aviator landed at Kronstadt instead of at Oranienbaum, but, taxiing through the lines of the mutineers, he succeeded in rising again, though his machine was covered with bullet marks.

The battleship Petropavlovsk, on which the mutiny started, has steam up, and is reported to have made an unsuccessful attempt to break through the ice. No smoke has been seen to come from the fire stacks of the other battleship, Sevastopol, probably owing to the lack of fuel. Otherwise, apart from the first unsuccessful attempt to approach the forts, the siege of Kronstadt up to Sunday has been without incident, and so far has had the effect of reuniting the factions of the Communist Party.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. March 18, 1921.

Fall Of Kronstadt.

Reval, Tuesday.

I learned by telephone from Petrograd that Kronstadt fell this morning.

MG. March 18, 1921.

Russian Treaty With Afghanistan.

Annual Subsidy.

Limitation Of British Influence.

No Separate Alliance.

Reval, Thursday.

During the last few weeks the main interest in Moscow's international affairs has been concentrated on relations with the East. Apart from the Persian treaty and an offer to join an Anglo-Russian Commission under Persian presidency to arrange for the simultaneous withdrawal of English and Russian troops from Persia, there have been negotiations with Bokharans and Afghans, while the more important treaty with the Angora Government of Turkey is likely to be signed next Saturday.

The postponement of the trade agreement with England on account of political clauses probably influenced these negotiations, which are being hurried through. Most interesting is the attitude of the Turks, who have adopted a definite policy urging a friendly attitude towards Russia among all Mohammedan nations whom they can influence. The Turks are working for Russia though no doubt in the long run for Turkey, in Turkestan, Bokhara, and Afghanistan, as well as among the Mohammedan races within Russian frontiers, who have their own republic.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The treaty just signed with Afghanistan, while recognizing complete Afghan independence, practically turns the Afghan Government into an institution subsidized by Russia. The Afghan Government is given an annual allowance of 1 million roubles in gold or silver. Russia promises to construct and telegraphs between Kushk , Herat , Kandahar, and Kabul, and to lend the Afghan Government technical and other instructors.

The treaty brings definitely to an end the old isolation of Afghanistan. The Afghans will have seven consulates in Central Asia and European Russia, and the Russians will have consulates in the towns of Herat, Meimen (Maimana), Mazarisherif, Jardagac (Kandahar), and Ghazni. The goods bought by Afghanistan in Russia or Europe will be untaxed in transit through Russia.

The most important clause, as far as England is concerned, is the second, saying:

The high contracting parties bind themselves not to enter with the third Power into a military or political agreement which would be detrimental to one of the contracting parties.

MG. March 19, 1921.

**Goods Russia Will Trade In.
Her Products Ready For Export.
Special Statement By Mr. Litvinoff**

Reval, Friday Evening.

Mr. Livinoff interviewed on the signing of the trade agreement, said: –

"We have hitherto had to deal through intermediaries and so to pay high prices for inferior goods. We should much prefer to transfer the center

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of our foreign trade to London, and there deal direct with solid firms, but the efficacy of the agreement in altering the old state of affairs depends on the goodwill of the British Government and on its ability to eradicate the distrust created by the unfortunate events of the last three years. Russia still depends on the goodwill of the British Government for the security of its gold and its goods.

"On the other hand, we should wish the British to understand that we are in earnest when we say that we regard as the most important form of propaganda our own efforts to stabilize Russian economy and to combat the chaos left by the prolonged struggle.

"You ask what Russia particularly needs. She needs now what she has needed since before the blockade started – agricultural instruments, railway material, and machines. With regard to export, there are large stocks of flax that have been held up for several years. There are also hemp, furs, bristles, timber, asbestos, and licorice, besides such luxuries as champagne, of which a quantity has been already exported, and caviar, of which a quantity is now in Reval"

I inquired about opening the frontiers to British merchants. Mr.Litvinoff replied :

« With regard to admitting people into Russia we shall be precisely as careful as the British Government over the admission of Russians into England."

MG. April 18, 1921.

Lenin's Retreat.

A Matter of Strategy.

No Change In His View Of Communism.

Reval, April 7.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Misquotation, misunderstanding, and muddled – headedness have produced the impression that recent events in Russia implies some change of heart in Lenin, some fundamental modification in his theoretical stand – point. The wild men of Moscow, the extreme Left of the Communist Party, were for a moment at one with Mr. Lloyd George in believing that Lenin had altered his mind and was making speeches "that might have been made by Mr. Churchill." The American Note, however, with its bland demand that the leopard should change its spots, it's obvious belief that the spots were still unchanged, was probably of considerable help to the Bolsheviks in an internal situation, the main difficulty of which was that they were being accused of having turned bourgeois and played false to the principles of the October Revolution.

Actually Lenin has not in the smallest degree modified his view of Communism. The revolution is dilatory. Russia is recalcitrant. He recognizes both facts, but has modified not his view of Communism but his view of the moment in Russia. The distinction is vital. The new change in internal policy, if Lenin were the sort of weathercock he is now supposed to be by many of the same people who for three years have been describing him as a purblind, uncontrollable fanatic, would have been equivalent to a complete moral capitulation, which would most certainly have knocked the bottom out of the Revolution. Nothing of the sort has happened. Neither the fanatic nor the weathercock estimate of Lenin is right, though of two the fanatic estimate is a little nearer to the truth. Both are due to the irrevocable tendency of the human mind to make a myth instead of analyzing. It is so much easier to see a dramatic picture of Lenin recasting than face the complex pattern of cross-currents that affect the policy of Governments in Russia as elsewhere. It is so much easier to imagine a violent change in a single man when you realize that the change has been going on all the time, hampered by external events, and that the change of policy openly expressed by Lenin is merely a registration of many changes of which most people have been vaguely aware before.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Agricultural Policy.

In the first place, what does the change actually amount to? In this year, instead of 423 million, 250 million poods of corn are to be requisitioned from the agricultural population; 423 million was a nominal estimate for last year. If the whole 250 million are actually collected it will still be doubtful whether the actual amount taken under the new system will be less or more than under the old. The real change consisted in two things: (1) the requisition is to be made by means of a percentage tax, and (2) once that tax has been paid the peasant will be free to trade with whatever amount he may have left over. This on the one hand recognizes private proprietorship and on the other puts an end to internal smuggling by the simple process of making legal transactions which were formally carried out in spite of a whole army of preventative officers.

The paragraph of the new decree (already law) which will be read with the greatest joy by those in the villages who can spell through a newspaper is that which announces the withdrawal of the detachments, which in their own way were the equivalent of our own Excisemen and coastguard's in the bad old days when we spent large sums in order to prevent ourselves from buying things cheaply. This is a concession to human nature, precisely as the trade agreement with England is a concession to foreign capital. In both cases the concession is made with the definite object of obtaining a quid pro quo. In both cases it will be difficult for the Communist to arrest the process of further changes which follow almost inevitably from these two. Already there seems to be a possibility of a similar relaxation of control from those small – scale industrial undertakings which have not been swallowed up in the nationalized industries. Already it is clear that there is to be a revival of the productive cooperated societies.

A Strategic Retreat.

But it has always been obvious, except to fanatics on the other side, that intransigence in Russia could not last beyond the moment when pressure from without should be relaxed. A Government in a state of war can do almost anything. In a state of peace it has to pay lively attention

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

to affairs at home. And these changes mean no more than recognition by Lenin and the bulk of the Communist Party that in Russia, for the moment, Communism has gone as far as it can go and a little further. In other countries statesmen would change their course silently without admitting that they had sailed too far on the wrong tack. In Russia, where the degree of efficiency in governing depends on the complete comprehension of what is happening by a very large body of men, silent change of course is impossible. Also, the Soviet Government is much in the position of the pianist in the Wild West ("Don't shoot at the man shoot at the piano. He is doing his best"). There is nothing at hand to replace it, and it can afford, and as a proof of good faith is almost anxious, to admit that it has struck a false note now and again.

And so, at the chosen moment, Lenin plumps out with a round statement that "in a country of small bourgeois" that is to say, in Russia – the Communist have gone further in limiting free local trade than was necessary. He says, "We were mistaken and must withdraw." The withdrawal is already taking place. But it would be a grave mistake to take this withdrawal as an admission by Lenin that the Communist aims were wrong. It is merely an admission that under present conditions it is impossible to realize those aims. It is a strategic retreat. It is a sort of peace of Brest-Litovsk on the internal front. This retreat will be very difficult to carry out for all sorts of reasons which have little to do with politics, such as the danger that last year's drought, together with this relaxation of control, may bring about a shortage of seed corn. At the same time, difficult or easy, given peace abroad, retreat at home was absolutely necessary. While Russia was a war the mere hint of retreat, of doubt in internal affairs, would have weakened the defense. Peace freed discontents at home. Although attempts have been made, seemingly on inspiration from abroad, to coordinate small revolts and to engage in conspiracies that would once again create a state of affairs in which the dictatorship would find new force and retreat would be unlikely, they have had small success. The feeling of peace is in the air. There are no fronts. There is time to take stock, and retreat follows as a matter of course.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Agreement with England, trade with the capitalist of almost every European country, is in its way, for Lenin, a similar retreat. We all know that he would prefer to deal with nobody but Soviet republics. I think it may be said with accuracy that even the limited contact with foreign countries that has hitherto been allowed has destroyed the illusions of imminent revolution everywhere that were easily fostered during the blockade. A short time ago, at a meeting in Moscow, somebody criticized the Soviet Government for its "isolation from the capitalist world." Lenin replied, "When a wolf is trying to capture and kill a sheep and the sheep is trying to save itself, only a fool would criticize it for such isolation from the wolf as it is able to secure." The moment the armed struggle ceased he was ready to put an end to that isolation at once, not because he had changed his mind about capitalist countries, but because the needs of Russia, the needs of that enormous peasant population, the saved-up needs of seven years of war, were too great to allow of anything else. Because he cannot do otherwise he is ready to go a long way to meet the very foreign capitalist who have so far been keeping Russia at war.

In precisely the same way, with peace comes recognition of the millions of small home – grown capitalists who make up the bulk of the Russian agricultural population. It has long been obvious that something of the sort must happen. It has been a common subject of private debate. I have made a point of discussing with Communists of every kind how the retreat (which all admitted would be inevitable) would actually be carried out. Would it necessarily be reflected in a change of Government or not. "Why should it?" said most of them. "Lenin is better able to retreat than anybody else. He has had plenty of practice. When the time comes he will retreat just as far as is necessary, and will be in his new positions before our enemies realize what is happening or that anything is happening at all."

That is the quality that makes Lenin as much a statesman as "a leader of revolt." There is probably no statesmen living who has in the far distance before him so terribly definite an object. On the other hand, there has never been a leader of revolt so well able on occasion to keep his fanaticism in check. Undeviating in the long run, but turning,

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

twisting, retreating at the call of the moment, he has earned the contradictory reputation of fanatic and weathercock. In reality not Lloyd George himself is a greater opportunist, nor is Sir Edward Carson more dourly concentrated on his aim.

MG. June 27, 1921.

Port Of Reval.

Reval, June.

Sitting on the green – painted cabin roof of the diminutive Kittiwake, I seem to have found one of the few Vantage points in Europe where it is possible for an observer to be hopeful. My little boat is anchored just inside the entrance to the harbor, and the whole Port of Reval, one time "Port of Peter the Great," as it is still called on English Admiralty charts, has open before me. The Kittiwake plunges and rolls at the waves of the hurrying tugs, and has under her tossing bowsprit, under her very nose, as it were, all the traffic of the port. And there really is traffic. After seven years – or is it eight? – This old trade route is reopening and though we ourselves are making, so far, very little use of it, the likeliness of the traffic even of foreign ships is encouraging for the European, no matter of what nation, who has been made to realize, however dimly, the changes which European civilization has not yet escaped.

There before me is the tall elevator, a modern building hardly recalling the old house of the Hansa merchants home of which are still to be seen in the town with their lofty storerooms and overhanging cranes. Rising narrow and gray among the slim masts of the sailing ships, those tops almost reach its upper stories. Along the Victorian Quay, in the Commercial harbor, and in the farther basin why the steamers of all nations, busy once more with Russian trade. There are the German ships, from Stettin, Lubeck, and Hamburg, as in the old days of the Hansa League. There is the Hemdall of Stockholm, with her lifted icebreaker bows for running through the thin ice between Sweden and Finland in

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the winter – time. She has come for yet another parcel of the Russian gold, the bulk of which passes through Stockholm to the Western world. There is the Vendyssel of Copenhagen; then the little white – rimmed funnel of the Baltannic art of London, herself lately a Danish ship; then the Malila, a strange little wooden – built steam and sailing vessel which has found her way, from Norway with a cargo of salt fish. Over there beside the farther quay are the large American ships the Portia and Chepata. (The Americans find trade with Russia impossible, but the goods they bring to Reval, so I am told are in Russian hands within 24 hours of arrival.) Besides these are the Estonian and Finnish steamers Kalevipoeg, Kajak, Eliha Munck, Koduman, Emlla, scores of sailing vessels in the timber and potato trade, and a regular fleet of little sailing boats with auxiliary motors to whom everybody frankly refers as "the 'smuggler's'" and explains that they make a living out of illicit trade across the Gulf. In the far corner is the Estonian Navy, gray and proud, with sailors doing some smart signal work from the tops. And behind them all is the town, with its tall spires and citadel rock, with the Scandinavian Towers and Gothic houses that tell its ancient history, and over all the anomalous gold domes of the Russian church planted in domination on the summit of the hill, the relic of an unseemly competition insult, not between Russian and the Estonians, but between an individual Russian Governor and the German barons, between whom as oppressors the Estonians found little to choose.

Just now the most interesting ship in Reval is not in the Commercial Harbor among all these busy steamers, but is waiting her turn beside the floating dock on the other side of the "hollwerk," She is a dirty, damaged little steamship much in need of paint, and on her stern in Russian characters is written her name "Subbotnik" ("Saturdaying") and her port of origin, "Archangel," and above her, in the light breeze from the southwest, is flapping a red revolutionary flag with the letters R.S. F.S.R. The official flag of the Russian Socialist Federate Soviet Republic. Soon after she was brought into Reval – about the time the Kronstadt mutiny began, all kinds of stories were current about her. She was said to be loaded with cases marked "Typewriters" but really containing rifles. She was said to be a White Guard vessel disguised as a revolutionary. Some said she had come Kronstadt, others that she was

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

bound thither. In actual fact she is a little steamship of the Russian Republic which came without mishap from Archangel, through the White Sea, the Arctic, the North Sea, and the Baltic, only to have been caught in the ice and have a propeller damaged in the Gulf of Finland near Nargon Island, within sight of Reval. She was saved and brought into port by the Estonians, and when repairs have been completed she will take her part in a conversing goods to Petrograd.

That romantic, tattered little revolutionary ship sets the note of the Port of Reval in the summer of 1921. There is not another ship in the port flying the red flag, with the exception of the mud dredger, which flies that flag as it is flown by a steam roller, without significance, but there is hardly a ship in the port whose business is not connected directly or indirectly with the awakening Russian trade. They fly the flags of all nations but their cargoes, of boots and cloth and plows and engines go on from Reval over land to the frontier station where the same flag waves that makes the battered Subbunick an object of such speculative interest.

Reval, always one of the chief Russian ports, has regained thanks to the Revolution, the significance she had in the days of the Hunsa League, when Petrograd was nothing but a swamp. Now again, as in the distant past, Reval is the entrance to Russia, the harbor whither merchants from the West can send their ships, a true market and??? for foreign goods pouring once more into Russia after the seven years blockade.

On the quays as I write thousands upon thousands of plows, harrows, and other agricultural implements are lying. Here is a traveling crane, there the engines and tenders for a narrow gauge railway, the engines labeled in huge letters "Communist" and "International," flaunting their names, no doubt as a sort of propaganda. But who cares? The building of the engines gave work in some country trying hard to keep head above water, and in so far helped her to do so. Manufacturers who, in accordance with their contracts, paint the letters "R.S.F.S.R." On plows or flagrant revolutionary names on locomotives do not grind their teeth as the happy revolutionary imagines, but merely reckon with satisfaction that these orders from the revolutionary world are actually helping to

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

stabilize the disaster of a shaken fabric of European industry, and in particular to keep their works running and their men employed. Here in Reval the freight charges on transit goods for Russia practically pay for the Estonian railroad system. Even so, the amount of goods that go into Russia is only a miserable fraction of the country's enormous needs, and it is disheartening that of that miserable fraction so very small a share is British. But no matter. The mere increase of trade here affects all Europe, and in the long run is good for us, even if in the immediate business we have allowed ourselves to be outdone by nearly everybody.

Sitting here on the green – painted cabin roof of the Kittiwake, watching the sunshine on the ships flags of many nations, I feel I am looking on at the visible recovery of Europe, or at least at a gallant effort towards recovery made possible by Estonians courageous policy of peace. This obviously is the right way. Not one of all these ships is bringing shells or guns. All are bringing things to cure at once the hunger of the East and the unemployment of the West. And, going about their work with flags, they have an air of happiness in business and peace that makes each work – the same holiday. And now on with the Kittiwake's pocket handkerchief of a fore sail and out of harbor to see what new ship that is, hooting the cheerful tidings of her arrival in the Reval roads.

MG. July 12, 1921.

**Russian Policy In The East. [I].
The Conflict And The Accord With Turkey.
What Do They Signify.**

Reval, July 1.

[Part of The Right Margin Unreadable]

There are at the moment two new forces in the East, the Russian and Turkish Revolutions. They affect each other profoundly and have affected and will affect the rest of the East for many years to come,

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

whatsoever may be their own immediate future. ??? them they have already destroyed that ??? chess board into which clever young men segregated by their official position from close contact with real events, had plagued the Eastern world after the war. Older??? with these maps to help them to a??? the triviality and simplicity of what ??? were doing had decorously wrangled,??? to the rules of the game which prohibit them from admitting the sort of evaluation which would have made the game impossible to play, and had worked out treaties ??? benevolent sentiment and practical???. The treaties have been copied and signed. Lavish little lakes of sealing-wax had received the imprints of seals prepared for the occasion. There have been banquets. The war was done. The war was over and the??? of the East had been settled for all time.

And then, gradually people became conscious that nothing of the sort had happened. First one and then another alteration had to be made in those neat maps until they were a mass of corrections and the despair of the once happy designers. It was found that the treaties contained clauses so impossible that those who had signed and sealed tried hard to forget them and remembered them impatiently as a sort of persistent nightmare. The benign faces of the banquets became lined and grey in the morning. It was like the story of the christening to which a ??? important fairy had accidentally not been invited. Slowly it became clear that in this neat settlement and arrangement two strongest forces which exist in the East today had been left wholly out of account. It was 8true that their manners were not such as to make them pleasant guests at the banquets. They would probably have upset the tables. But, not invited, they were doing still worse, making maps and treaties alike ridiculous and slowly forcing upon the consciousness of everybody that the real play was still to come.

A Visit of Inquiry to Moscow.

In that real play we are among the people most closely concerned, and it is of such importance to us to know exactly what we have to do – it is already so clear that certain of the players are ready to urge us towards

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

moves which would further not our interests but their policies – that every scrap of evidence as to the actual state of affairs is worth collecting. At least, so I thought when I went into Russia early this year. I knew well enough that the two revolutionary forces of Turkey and Russia could not, without a repetition of fiasco, be simply lumped together as "hostile," as if that were a sufficient definition. I knew also that without ensuring an inaccurate diagnosis of any situation in which the two might be concerned it could not even be assumed that they were alike, or that they "were working hand – in – glove with each other." Each is entirely different and the two are as often in conflict as in accord. The accord is largely made possible by ourselves. The conflict arise from the very nature of the two forces and is likely to increase as time goes on.

I set out for Moscow with the definite object of looking at one of these forces from the focal point of the other, and the series of articles of which this is the first do not pretend to be more than notes made mostly in Moscow during a visit undertaken with this purpose. The East from the point of view of Moscow, the Turkish Revolution and its relation to Russian foreign policy – that was what I wanted to see; and the Kronstadt rebellion and other domestic excitements were merely irrelevancies that scarcely interrupted my diligent pursuit of khans, beys, and pashas on the one hand and on the other the examination of the extraordinary hotch=potch of manuscript and other material illustrated by the very contradictory comments of all kinds of Communist. Of course the East, the Turkish Revolution, the intricate affair of Afghanistan, Bokhara, Dagestan, etc. would look very different to an observer differently situated. Still, for observation of the particular thing in which I was interested Moscow was probably the proper place. The Revolutionaries of the East do indeed look towards Moscow when they are not looking towards the sacred places of Islam. The sacred places of Islam are at the moment mostly in the control of the non–Eastern peoples, and consequently many threads lead to Moscow that belong to a web that would in other circumstances have its center elsewhere.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Some Questions.

That fact alone is of sufficient importance to demand investigation. How is it that Moscow, that Russia has acquired a significance for the East which it certainly had not in the time of the Czar? How far does that significance depend on the continuance of the Communist regime? How far can disturbance in the East be put down to Communist propaganda, and how far can it be put down to other circumstances? How far, quite apart from the enunciation of principles, has the Russian Revolution affected the East merely by the sudden change which it brought about in the balance of forces? In later articles on the Turkish Revolution, on the recent history of Afghanistan, on Communism and the Turkish Revolution, and on the contradictory policies of the Soviet Government and the Third International I shall bring together material that suggests tentative answers to some of these questions. In the next article I want to do no more than to outline the principles of Russian Eastern policy, without an understanding of which the moves and counter – moves between Moscow and the East and the network of new alliances seem like a game of blind – man's – bluff in which not one player is blindfolded but all.

MG. July 13, 1921.

Russian Policy In The East. II.

Uniting The Moslem World Against The West.

A Means To Revolution In Europe.

Reval, July 5.

As far as the East was concerned, after the sudden relaxation of Russian pressure, the central fact of the Russian Revolution was that it raised the whole question of foreign dependencies, not as it was raised during the war, when both sides proclaimed principles to apply to enemy nations only, but by proclaiming a principle to apply to all nations, Russia herself setting the example – a principle of wholesale renunciation. The

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

principle laid down was that regardless of the superior strength of certain nations, regardless of their economic interests, each nation, however small, however weak had an absolute inalienable right to dispose of itself as it should think fit.

As the Communist put it, the whole system "of colonies, of spheres of influence in which some foreign nation was politely but firmly master of the house, of protectorates in which nations were forcibly protected from the dangerous ideas of protecting themselves against their protectors, of mandates given by anybody except the people whose affairs the mandates concerned" was called in question, not by a professor in his study, not by a group of unpractical philanthropist in a club, not by a nation through the megaphone of revolution which stirred the whole of civilization nearly as profoundly as the trumpets of the Israelites seven times blown stirred the walls of Jericho.

The phenomenon had occurred before and though the megaphone in those days was less efficient and the effect produced was on a smaller scale, it was similar in character. The French Revolution in its early stages made a renunciation of conquest. And in Belfast, on July 14, 1791, a public meeting of volunteers and other inhabitants passed a resolution that "We congratulate the Christian world that there is in it one great nation which has renounced all ideas of conquest and has published the first glorious manifesto of humanity, of union, and of peace." The French Revolution was of course fought into taking a different attitude, but the mere words of its beginning were an encouragement to those who founded the "United Irishman" and to some degree made possible the rebellion of 1798. Today the Nationalist East looks towards Moscow precisely as the rebellious Irish looked towards Paris in 1791. The Emir of Afghanistan, writing to Lenin in a letter reprinted in a later article uses expressions similar to those of the men of Belfast. The Turkey that is ruled from Angora (the only Turkey that counts) Persia, Afghanistan, Bokhara, and Tibet have their properly recognized Ambassadors, Ministers, or Envoys in Moscow, while Europe is still playing into extremist hands to Russia and the East alike by isolating Russia and Turkey together in common outlawry. The first four named have concluded definite treaties with Russia of a more intimate

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

and friendly kind than have ever before recorded Russia's relations with her Eastern neighbors. The East, as the Afghan Emir put it, looks up on Lenin temporarily as "the humane defender of civilization, may Allah preserve him."

That, of course, is not a permanent state of affairs. It is worthwhile to remember that though the French Revolution began with the renunciation of conquest it ended with Napoleons grand tour of Europe. And we should perhaps consider the possibility that this whole phenomenon of principled renunciation on the part of Russia is an example of something like the protective coloring of chameleons, certain caterpillars, some animals, and many birds. Perhaps men and nations enjoy protective coloring in ideas, not so much against external enemies as against moral discomfort. During the war nothing was more remarkable than the avidity with which kindly – minded men of all nations grasped after the ideas which would justify them to themselves in the overturn of all their instincts which was involved in the business of warfare. After the war, in a victorious nation these ideas come to the top which justify it in taking the least scrupulous advantage of its victory. A beaten nation, on the other hand, unless driven desperate rapidly persuades itself that not it but some accidental rulers of it wanted formally to win. And perhaps Russia, broken by the war, ruined, conscious of her imminent disintegration, was naturally ready to let the ideas and consequently the individual exponents of those ideas, come to the top, which made disintegration seem not a painful putrescent but a voluntary, even an enthusiastic act of self – realization.

If there is anything in that theory we should expect to find that as Russia recovers strength so will the ideas of her present rulers find glosses capable of justifying in some form or other the extension of her power. We should expect the development of some sort of Communist Imperialism, or that others with the suitable ideas should replace the Communists, who make aggression possible without uncomfortable contradictions. That some sort of Communist Imperialism is possible is already manifest, and perhaps the very men who broke into the orderly staid sonata of diplomatic expression of the acquisitive instincts with a cheerful disconcerting burst of rag-time renunciation may be the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

instruments of its realization. But even if these men are replaced by others who will reject to 99% of the Communist ideology they will do their best to retain, as Napoleon retained, as much of the Revolution's mental baggage as can be classed as munitions of war.

Part of the mental baggage to be retained by the heirs of the Revolution will be precisely this attitude of renunciation of economic interest in the East. Even should there be the completest counter- revolution, it will be a long time before any Russians are capable of having economic interests of that kind. Why, then, not continue to renounce them? Renunciation of the ordinary motives of a nation's foreign affairs has given Russia an advantageous position in Eastern diplomacy which no Russian Government is likely to sacrifice for economic reasons in the near future. Political reasons, however, may take the place of economic in weakening that position. Russia may continue to renounce all kinds of material gain, but if Communism and Russian friendship continue to be closely bound up together, fear of revolt against themselves may lessen the goodwill of the Eastern Governments towards a Power that they feel to be sympathetic towards their own desires to revolt against other people. This internal contradiction in Russian policy, which must at last lead to some radical change in her foreign relations, is already visible in Russian dealings with Turkey, at present her most important ally. It lent an atmosphere of mistrust to dealings with her on the part of Persia. It showed itself in such small things as the refusal of the Afghans to allow the Russian Mission to hang the red flag of the Republic outside their house in Kabul at the very time when official relations on larger matters were of the most cordial kind. The overthrow not on Communist lines, but with Communist help, of the old more or less despotic governments of Bokhara and Khiva increased the vague fear already felt. The Revolution with its first words made the East an ally of Russia; and that same Revolution is already well on its way to create new disagreements between Russia and the East. To put it briefly, the policies of the Soviet Government and of the Third International are already in contradiction, and in some cases are in a fair way to nullify each other.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The policy of the Third International with regard to East and West alike is simple enough. It is to urge proletarians to unite, and, if there are no proletarians, to urge someone else to unite in their place, with the object of bringing about a Communist revolution here, there, and everywhere as speedily as possible. The policy of the Soviet Government is a Russian policy, planned on much larger lines and much more closely based upon realities. It has been entirely consistent from the first days of the revolution. The Soviet Government, conscious that from its very nature it would have every established Government in the world as its enemy, began at once to make such friends as it could, to detach, where possible, forces from its opponents, to block such weapons as might be used against it. From the very first it tried to get on the right side of the Mohammedan world. It began at home with an address to Mohammedans within the frontiers of the Russian Empire: "Moslems of Russia, Tartars of the Volga and the Crimea, Khirghiz and Sarts of Siberia and Turkestan. Tchetchentzi and Mountaineers of the Caucasus, all whose mosques and sacred places have been destroyed, whose religion and customs have been persecuted by the Czar's and oppressors of Asia now that henceforth your religion and customs, your national and cultural institutions, are declared free and inviolable." One of its first acts was to hand over to the Muslims the sacred Koran of the Khalif Osman, captured at Samarkand, and kept in the Public Library in Petrograd, where for many years it had been an object of pilgrimage for the faithful from all parts of the East. I proceeded to forestall secessionist movements which might be utilized against it by granting local autonomy or the status of federal States to the districts inside Russia inhabited by Mohammedan tribes. Thus the Bashirs and Khirghiz have become Soviet Republics, and even the Kalmucks have district autonomy. It created a special commissariat for the affairs of the Mussulmans in Russia.

And meanwhile, by wholesale renunciation abroad, it was sowing seeds of slower growth but greater promise. At home it sought merely to make friends of potential enemies, to increase the numbers of those for whom counter-revolution would be undesirable. ??? It sought to do more. Believing that domination in the East was one of the keystones of the whole fabric of Western Europe, and especially of that of England, it

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

sought by mere withdrawal of the Russian share in that domination to shake that fabric in a manner that would make mere propaganda the idlest luxury.

"In a world of kleptomaniac's anyone who announces that for moral reasons he is not going to steal is a dangerous heretic, threatening the very foundations of society." He is dangerous because his enemies cannot counter his "propaganda" without imitating it themselves. The Communists are perfectly aware of their advantage, cheerfully regarding themselves as the heretic and all other Governments as kleptomaniac's. Pavlovitch, in his "Questions of Colonial and National Policy," a pamphlet of great interest to anyone who wishes to know the Communist attitude to these matters, puts the situation from the point of view of "capitalist nations" in the simplest possible manner; In fact, in case of conflict, it would have been possible to oppose to the armies of the Czar armies of millions, squadrons of dreadnoughts and super dreadnoughts, thousands and thousands of submarines, airplanes, etc., but what can they oppose to a liberating force, the force of an idea which not only encourages the whole East to a war of life and death with the vultures of capitalism, but also disintegrates the armies of the Allies themselves? Further, with Czarist Russia it was possible to conclude a definite agreement with regard to the division of the booty. It was possible to give the Czar half Persia, or a part of Turkey, and to take the rest oneself and to live, until the day of reckoning, on the stolen goods; but how can one reconcile oneself with a powerful and great country of many millions which does not want to live by oppression, robbery, and murder, which does not want to follow an Imperialistic policy, and indeed threatens to set up a strong barrier against the Robber Policy of the Capitalist Powers by insisting the metamorphosis of the hitherto oppressed Eastern countries, the colonies of the European capitalist, into countries free and independent?

It was certainly easier for us in Persia when Russia was an aggressive Power, striving like ourselves for economic advantages, then it is now when our competitor has ostentatiously and with studied insult withdrawn from the field. His mere departure is a shrewd blow at ourselves, unless we conceive that we are strong enough to dominate

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the East alone. Yet we can hardly complain of it, or demand that he should once more join us in getting what can be got out of Persia even in the way of contracts that would eventually benefit the Persians. The Persians might not understand our motives. Nor is that all. The mere fact of one great country adopting such principles and acting up on them is worse than any educational propaganda in suggesting to the hitherto passive East that its extremist were right and that there is no obvious reason why other nations might not be induced do the same. And, to put the advantage from the Russian point of view at its very lowest, no Eastern nation is likely to fight Russia on our behalf, but is more likely, if there is fighting to be done, to take to arms in the hope of persuading other nations to follow Russia's example in (as in the case of Persia) making them presents of expensive railways and telegraphs, and at the same time removing their troops from nominally Eastern dominions.

The very existence of Soviet Russia is a threat to the whole system of Eastern dependencies, and on the other hand every nationalist movement throughout the East sees in Soviet Russia, if not a friend, at least a benevolent neutral. As Pavlovitch puts it, the two questions are bound at the moment inextricably together, and "war against Soviet Russia is war against the Revolutionary East, and, vice versa, war against the Revolutionary East is war against Soviet Russia," Turkish delegates who signed the Treaty of Alliance between Angora and Russia used almost these words in stating the grounds of their desire for a Turkish – Russian rapprochement. Turkish agents (non— Communist) throughout the East are urging precisely this view upon those of their co-religionists who are more disturbed by the activities of the Third International than grateful for the benevolent attitude of official Moscow.

But Russian policy in the East, at first purely one of self – defense, has during the long war of intervention crystallized into a weapon of offense. The wording of the Persian treaty showed clearly enough that renunciation has now found quite another base than that of a disinterested desire to leave the East to its own devices. Renunciation is now being consciously used as a revolutionary instrument, and Russian policy in the East, apart from immediate aims, is now obviously

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

an essential part of Communist revolutionary policy in the West. The Communist care much less about the enfranchisement of the Orient from European domination than about the spread of revolution in Europe, the complete success of which, they think, would bring revolution in the East as a matter of course. The East is to be used to overturn Europe, after which it is expected to turn a somersault itself.

The Communist believe that a general conflagration in the East, the loss of or a heavy struggle to retain India, Egypt, Southern Persia, Mesopotamia, would put such a strain on the structure of the British Empire that it's collapse in revolution would be inevitable. Napoleon had a similar idea and tried to use the Pyramids as stepping stones across the English Channel. The Communist are not so crude. They do not plan an invasion of India or anything like it. But they do believe that a general revolt in the East is probable, irrespective of their desires. They see in the Turkish Revolution its first beginnings and, though they fully recognize the possible danger to themselves, they welcome it. It is for this reason that they not only seek alliance themselves with Eastern peoples, but encourage alliances between Turkey and Afghanistan, between Turkey and Persia, between Persia and Afghanistan. They would unite the whole East in the struggle against European domination. Their policy is the opposite to that of ancient empire. Instead of "Divide them and thou shalt rule." They write "Unite them and they shall be free." World revolution, they admit, is a slow process, but this is the way of it. The road of revolution as they see it is like the roads of Mr. Chesterton's Poland – "The night we went to Birmingham by way of Beachy Head." They would digress a little farther afield, believing that the British Empire, the greatest citadel of capitalism, will come toppling about their heads –" The dawn they come to Manchester by way of Hindoo Khoosh."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. July 14, 1921

**Russian Policy In The East. III.
Origin Of The Turkish Nationalist Revolt.
It's Motive And Methods.**

Rival, June 6.

[Right margin, column 2, partially unreadable.]

[Mr. Ransome desires readers of this and subsequent articles to bear in mind that in writing them he has had access almost exclusively to Russian and Turkish sources; he adds that to some of the statements made there may be another side, but that these are accepted as the truth, and are acted on as such, in Russia and the East.]

The first point that must strike any investigator into the Turkish Revolution is that, whatever else the Turks whom we call Kemalists may be, they are not followers of Kemal Pasha or of any other individual leader. It was a grave mistake to assume that "the Kemalists movement" was a mere uprising of brigands and adventurers making use for their own purposes of the disordered state of Turkey consequent on an unsuccessful war. This movement is an actual revolution, with its own ideas, its own ideals, and, consequently, like the French or the Russian Revolution's, a thing of quite incalculable weaknesses and strengths, capable of unexpected collapses, of extraordinary resuscitation's, and likely at any moment to produce one of those minor miracles which so terribly discomfit those profits who leave out of count the unknown quantity of revolutionary vitality.

It was hard for financiers anxious to go on doing good to Turkey under the advantageous regime of the Capitulations to recognize that this revolution had an economic basis in the desire of the Turks to be quit forever of the arrangements whereby every enterprise of a profitable character in Turkey (with the exception, of course, of bribery) fell naturally into non-- Turkish hands. It was easy for Europeans to see in

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

armed revolt against their dividing up of the Turkish Empire mere banditry, to be put down as soon as possible with the help of the "loyal" population – that is, of those who did not mind the smash of Turkey, had found ways of doing well of the infidels, or had reason to fear that they would do less well if their own countrymen were in complete control. Yet there is plenty of evidence to show that the so – called Kemalist movement is part of the main course of Turkish history, that it can be traced directly to the stirrings in the direction of political freedom which from time to time we in Western Europe welcome, and that it's only difference from these tentative applauded efforts is that it is directed against ourselves, because, at the moment, we seem to the Turks to be more oppressive than any Abdul Hamid of the past.

The Revolution in Turkey.

Before inquiring how it came to make this unfortunate estimate of ourselves, an estimate which will affect us in a far wider field than that of Turkey alone, let us glance, however briefly, at the rather disappointing history of Turkish liberalism. The first remarkable characteristic of all liberal or revolutionary movements in Turkey, of every stirring against the absolutism of the Sultan, the Germans, or the Allies, has been that the initiative has always been with the army and among the officers. In other countries there have usually been privileged officer classes who formed the strongest possible adherents of the existing regime. Russia and Germany are obvious examples. In Turkey, on the other hand, officers have been recruited from all classes of the population without exception. Through the army anyone might come to honor and rank. The result has been instead of forming a definite aristocratic class the Turkish officers have represented the whole population, and that the most intelligent and lively part of the population has found its way into the army instead of, as in Russia, into civilian or official posts, most of which in Turkey or occupied by Greeks, Armenians, or other foreigners. The officers have in the past been at the head of each revolutionary movement, taking their men with them. That is so in the present Turkish revolution, although in this case, as I have heard them admit, the officers were only just in time, for the man were moving anyhow.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

50 years ago such Turkish intelligentsia as there was, and a sufficient number of officers to be formidable, were openly trying to soften the edges of absolutism. There were the beginnings of Parliamentarianism ushered in by a salvo of artillery. But the Russo – Turkish War, though it ended in a Turkish defeat, gave Abdul Hamid his opportunity. He lost the war, but not until he had had time to execute to liberal leaders and to reoccupy the old position of the Sultans. He dissolved the Parliament and allowed no new elections. The succeeding 30 years were passed in systematic suppression of all liberal discontents.

At last in 1908 the party of "Unity and Progress" (the Young Turks), led by Enver, Ta'at, and others, with the support of the Turkish intelligentsia and the bulk of the army, began an open struggle with the Government. The struggle was successful, in so far that it ended that particular absolutism. A Parliament was formed, the leader of which was Talaat. Abdul Hamid was deposed. His brother Mohammed Reshat V, succeeded him, and was himself succeeded by Mohammed Valedin VI,. But the Young Turks soon showed themselves not unlike the regime they had destroyed. The Parliament was gradually reduced to nothing, while the Cabinet, of one – time revolutionaries, remained. The early stages of the war of course strengthened this new born absolutism.

Turkeys Motives in the War.

Turkey went into the war on that German side, for two reasons. The first of these was the German diplomacy was a great deal cleverer in managing the Young Turks than we were. The second reason was that a German victory offered the Turks greater hopes of recovering Mohammedan territory than an English one. They reason, "Since England does not give up Egypt now, she will be still less likely to give it up if she succeeds in beating Germany." On the other hand, Germany had not yet got her hands on any great Mohammeden country, so that in case she won with Turkish help there seemed to be hope that she would not contest the claims of her ally. The German Emperor, it will be remembered, had done his best to spread a legend of himself as a divinely appointed protector of Islam. Besides that, putting England out

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of the question, he was at war with Russia, which, as everyone knew, wanted Constantinople, had succeeded in making away with Batum contrary to treaty, besides allowing Turkestan and recovering the tribute she had paid to the Khans in the Middle Ages by pushing rapaciously forward into Central Asia in these modern times when tribute is much more scientifically collected. Thus, leaving Italy with Tripoli and France with Morocco out of account, on one side were England and Russia both of whom already ruled huge areas of the Muslim world, whereas on the other was an innocent Emperor, almost a Muslim, who had never laid hands on anything Turkish, and knew perfectly how to flatter and in other ways to secure the [second column] support of the ??? Pasha. This, or something like it, ??? with which Turkey entered the war??? before the war ended, the only??? was remembered in the Turkish army as ??? last of all. "Down with??? masters." shouted the deserting soldiers, and with our pashas ??? us to them."

At the time of the signing of the??? England, by simple revulsion??? probably the most popular foreign?? Turkey, although already the?? Russian Revolution made many??? feelings towards Russia from??? where war had brought??? the edges of despotism and??? power of the bureaucracy, grown rich on disaster and fat on deaths. This last motive must be omitted from our estimate??? Which followed, which was certainly a revolt against those who had ??? a revolt of the fighting men ??? the profiteers. As for the Germans long ago succeeded in making ??? well hated in Turkey. Their ??? of the time-honored Turkish ??? and laziness, their ??? their a lies, their slighting of ??? responsible positions, had annoyed and alienated even those of the ??? had begun the war by being pro-German ??? calculation. On the other hand ???really believed that the Allies ??? President Wilson said when he offered Fourteen Points. They did not ??? moment that the peace they won ??? would be anything like the peace of ???. They recognized their mistakes, and ??? to give up a good deal, but ??? peace of annihilation. They were under ??? with promptitude.

The Coming of Revolt.

The conditions of the Armistice were??? heavy and showed already what

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

was to ??? follow, but the Turks (as several???) Turkish informants have told me??? that they would be ameliorated by the??? peace. The first six months of??? devoted to destroying Turkish hopes??? uniting almost all sections of the???, the common despair that makes revolution possible. The first signs of coming??? from above were the activities of a??? society. This society (an unprinted???) which I have seen in Moscow calls it??? but I am not sure whether that is a Russian translation of its name as "Sentinel"??? transliteration of Turkish, like the??? proper names in the manuscript) had formed towards the end of the war, where moral disruption of the Young Turks and ??? complete failure of their policy became apparent. Those who wished to "to escape??? the dirt of the decomposing corpse of??? Young Turks party" decided to form an organization which should unite the people to meet the impending catastrophe. The society admitted all shades of political opinion. Its motive was to resolve to save the Turkish people from "dismemberment and enslavement." It was characteristic of the movement that from the start admission to this society depended not on party but on political probity, and on having refrained from profiteering during the war, by which many of the Young Turks had badly compromised themselves. The younger officers played a great part in the organization, a fact which, in Turkey, was of immense revolutionary significance.

MG. July 15, 1921.

**Russian Policy In The East. IV.
Turkish Nationalists Program Of Revolt.
How The Allies Fanned The Flames.**

[Mr. Ransome desires readers of this and subsequent articles to bear in mind that in writing them he has had access almost exclusively to Russian and Turkish sources: he adds that to some of the statements made there may be another side, but that these are accepted as the truth, and are acted on as such, in Russia and the East.]

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Reval, July 7.

The period that followed the Armistice produced in Turkey the revolutionary events which gave the secret society "Karaul" its opportunity. These events amounted to a general spontaneous revolt against Turkish officialdom. The revolt began in Eastern Anatolia, in the district of Erzerum. It was not at first anti-Ally, being concerned with more immediate opponents. The actual peasants and soldiers, taking their officers with them rather than being led by them, flung out the old profiteering officials. The country was full of deserters and soldiery who were inflamed against the Government that had entered the war and landed them in this mess of defeat and against the grasping officials were visibly profiting in every possible way. Resentment showed itself and riots and ejections. The old officialdom absconded as swiftly as it could and where it could, a revolutionary period had begun. It was significant not so much that the old officials were replaced by new as that an attempt was made to choose these new officials by election.

A first congress was summoned in Erzerum with no wider object than to create some organ of self-government for the district. But the secret society above mentioned not only took control of this congress but also set about summoning other congresses throughout Anatolia and even in European Turkey. The Erzerum Congress, though in general non-political, had an immense majority of members more or less Nationalist, and more or less democratic in political coloring. There were a few Clerical Pan-Islamists. Little was done except to arrange for a larger congress, which met towards the end of 1919 in Sivas. The political character of this latter congress showed that the domestic revolution of Erzerum was turning into a Nationalist movement. The revolution in getting rid of the old officialdom found that it had new enemies in the shape of the foreign conquerors, who wherever they happen to be, defended law and order. The Turks, explaining themselves to the Russians, insist that the class and national instincts of the movement were definitely fused when it was found that the whole of the new Turkish "bourgeoisie," created during the war by profiteering, took up a position hostile to the revolution, seeing in the foreigners the defenders of its own games. This "bourgeoisie," insignificant as a force because

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

small in number, joined the party "Huriet vs. Itilaf," which is pro—Entente and, at the same time, in favor of the old regime.

A Liberation Movement.

The Congress of Sivas laid down a program and is now considered by the Turkish Nationalist leaders as the starting – point of their movement, since they are already inclined to forget the more homely gathering of Erzerum and the character of popular revolt which marked the earlier stages of the revolution. The Sivas Congress will, in the natural course of events, be itself pushed into the shadow of history, for as the Anatolian movement turns into a general movement for the liberation of all Mohammeden nationalities (and there are the clearest signs that it will end in this way) its leaders will be anxious to forget how modest were the demands which they put forward at Sivas before the opposition they encountered drove them into extremes. At Sivas there was notable abnegation From Pan–Turanianism and from Pan–Islamism. The losses of Mesopotamia and Arabia were implicitly recognized as unavoidable evils, and the hopes of the Congress were limited to the preservation of the independence and inviolability of the Turkish nation within its ethnographic frontiers

External and internal politics were closely bound up together, for while Sivas was decidedly one thing, Constantinople was doing what it was being told by the Allies. At Sivas was declared the formation of the party of "KuaMille" (National Strength), thenceforward the guiding force of the movement. Its expressed aim was the defense of the rights of the Turkish nation. A central executive committee was elected as a personal rival of Enver, the young general Mustapha Kemal, at the head of it. Under the influence of Kua Mille the Sivas Congress ask the Sultan to dismiss the Ministry which had concluded the Armistice. This was the Ministry of the Grand Visier Ferid Pasha, whose policy was one of complete submission to the Allies. The Congress further demanded that elections should be held and Parliament summoned. Finally it was decided to organize an army in Asia Minor which should be under the direction of the Congress – that is to say, of the Kua Mille party. This task was easily accomplished, since the troops of Asia Minor declared

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

their allegiance to Kua Mille bloc. All officials of the old Government were turned out and replaced by representatives of the Kua Mille, except, of course, in those places where the Allies were in control.

Constantinople at first imagined that the movement could be put down by force. Neither the Sultan nor his Grand Vizier had the slightest wish for a Parliament, and the Allies (I borrow the bitter expression from the Nationalist Turks), while certain of the allegiance of the Grand Vizier, were not so sure that the elected representatives of the Turkish people would be equally amenable. Accordingly the Constantinople Government sent troops to put down the malcontents who had dared to send such demands to their master. The troops promptly went over to the enemy and declared themselves part of the army of Kua Mille. The Sultan had no wish to sacrifice himself for the sake of a Grand Vizier, so he dismissed Ferid and called to power a popular non-- party general, Ali RizaBey, under whom the elections demanded were carried out and Parliament duly summoned.

Policy of the Allies.

The attitude of the Allies seems to have changed at this point. Perhaps the same sort of thing was happening with regard Turkish as happened with regard to Russian information. That is to say, that the ousted party, being for the moment "pro-- Ally," was invested with all the virtues and supposed to be an accurate source of political estimates. They, no doubt, loudly stated that "the real Turkey" was with them, and that this "real Turkey" would speedily disown the malcontents of Sivas who had dared to express undesirable opinions in the name of people who were actually only waiting to do exactly what the Allies wanted. The Allies may have taken these asseverations at their face value and assumed that, this being so, there could be no great harm in holding the elections, since the result would be to restore to power the men on whom they could count. Or it may be that they realized that, short of occupying all Turkey, they could not prevent elections altogether. They were in a strong position at Constantinople and in European Turkey, had

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

ships in the Bosphorus, had disarmed the troops of the vilayets of Stambul and Adrianople. In their own spheres of influence the Allies did not allow elections, but with regard to elections of support they took up a waiting position. The Turks are convinced that the Allies expected that the elections in Asia Minor would bring to the top of the party "Hurietveltilaf," which, as I have already pointed out, was insignificant in numbers but openly favorable to the Allies and violently opposed to the revolution.

The result of the elections was to put a very severe strain on the democratic principles of the Allies. Of 130 delegates who came to Constantinople in February, 1920, only one represented the party of "Hurietveltilaf," and 127 formed a solid block pledged to carry out the Kua Mille policy. All the members of this block agreed to the so - called "National Pact," and, disregarding all previous negotiations, declared that on the basis of that pact and on no other basis they were ready to conclude peace with the Entente.

The National Pact.

Now this National Pact set out the maximum of sacrifices which its signatories felt could be made for the sake of obtaining a lasting peace, and declared that the Ottoman State could not continue to exist on any other terms. They said that territories with a Mussulman Ottoman majority make up an indivisible whole, but that the population of territories with the Arab majority were to determine their fate by plebiscite. They said that they were ready to submit to a new plebiscite for the territories of Kars, Ardaghan, and Batum, which they alleged had already voted for unity with Turkey, after the Peace of Brest- Litovsk (even at this point there was still no thought of alliance with Russia). The fate of Western Thrace was also to be decided by plebiscite. Constantinople, as the seat of the Khahfate and the center of the Ottoman Empire, was to be free from all encroachment. Once this point was guaranteed, the question of the opening of the Straits for general traffic could be decided by agreement between Turkey and other interested Powers. The rights of non-- Mussulman populations in Turkish territory were to be guaranteed in the hope that similar rights would be

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

given to Mussulman populations in the surrounding countries. But from the point of view of malevolent financiers the last paragraph was the worst, for it demanded for Turkey an economic liberty similar to that of other States, and expressed the determined opposition of the signatories to any clauses in the eventual treaty of peace which should prevent "our political, financial, and judicial development," and added that stipulations concerning Turkey's financial engagements must not contradict these principles. That amounted to a definite statement that the regime of the Capitulations had come to an end, and that Turkey demanded to be treated like any other independent nation.

"It was, of course, obvious that Turkish delegates who took up so patriotic and uncompromising a position could not have been legitimately elected." So a cynical Turk summed up the attitude of the Allies after the meeting of the Parliament. A vociferous newspaper campaign was started to discredit the elections, and various risings, mostly in places near enough to impress foreigners, were more or less promptly staged. The effect of these things was to add obstinacy to the movement, and the Parliament itself was so far from having any doubts as to the validity of the credentials that, certain of having the country behind it, it did things which it would not have dared to do in any other circumstances. Thus it voted that the Cabinet of Ferid should be tried for having concluded an armistice on lines which have made possible some of the later proceedings of the Allies, and, further, for not having seen to it that the terms even of this unsatisfactory armistice were properly observed. It forced the Cabinet of the non-party Ali Rizato resign. A new Cabinet was formed, led by Salikh Pasha, who was himself a member of the Kua Mille party. Later on, in view of the English orientation of the Sultan and of the fact that both he and the Parliament were too near the guns of the Allied fleet, it is said that Kua Mille had decided to depose Mohammed VI., To place on the throne a Sultan more likely to carry out their policy, and, at least as a temporary measure, to shift the seat of the Sultan and of the Parliament into Asia Minor. The man named as probable new Sultan was Abdurrahman, son of Abdul Hamid.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The Parliament was not given time to carry into effect these later plans. We formally as well as effectively occupied Constantinople. We arrested the Grand Vizier, Salikh Pasha, together with all the more prominent members of Parliament, including more than half the Parliamentary Block, most of the Ministers, Abdurrahman , who had done nothing except get into current gossip as a possible new Sultan, besides many other people of various ranks. The Turks complained that 70 members of Parliament were deported to Malta. Meanwhile, with the agreement of the Sultan, who perhaps was delighted to be rid of so masterful a Parliament, a Ministry was formed led by Ferid , the head of the party "Hurietveltilaf," which in the elections had gained less than 1% of the popular vote.

MG. July 18, 1921

**Russian Policy In The East. V.
Origin Of The Alliance With Turkey.
Strength And Policy Of The Kemalists.**

Reval, July 8.

The arrest of the members of the Turkish Parliament and the forcible establishment of an undemocratic Government in Constantinople marked the end of the first stage of the Turkish Revolution. Up to this point a complete break between Constantinople and the Anatolian patriots had been avoided. It now became inevitable. The fact that the Government in Constantinople was talking with the Allies on behalf of the Turkish people whom it so flagrantly misrepresented was a challenge that could only be met in one way Constantinople could not be silenced but it could be ignored. It could not be prevented from making decisions, but the rest of Turkey could prove by actions that those decisions had no influence upon it, and that if decisions were wanted that were worth having it was necessary to deal with someone other than the amenable Ferid. Henceforth the revolution and those of the Turks who were willing under these circumstances to work with the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Allies were definitely at odds, and it became clear that the effect of the Allies' actions had been to solidify and strengthen, by imparting an heroic and national character, a movement but which in the beginnings had not been directed aggressively against themselves.

It should be remembered that there was no moment during which the Anatolian Turks were free from attack of some kind, legitimized perhaps a decision as to which they had not been party. They had not a moment to lose before setting up a new authority in Asia Minor to replace that of Constantinople, now definitely disowned. There had been debates beforehand as to whether the Parliament should meet in Angora or Constantinople, and Mustapha Kemal , who was of the former opinion, though elected as delegates from Sivas, had foretold the coup that took place, and did not go to Constantinople. He was in Angora when the news of the suppression of the Parliament added the prestige of political acumen to his already high reputation as a soldier. He, together with Ali Fuad (who, after being Commander. of the Turkish troops on the Greek front, went to Moscow to make the treaty with Russia) and others, immediately set about reinforcing the front and creating the National Assembly of Angora, which speedily became the only Government of authority in Turkey.

I saw Ali Faud in Moscow. He is a young man of considerable personal charm and a lively talker, sometimes, rather in the manner of Tartarin of Tarascon, waving Greeks, Frenchmen, Italians, and English with easy gestures into the sea, sometimes giving a lucid but not altogether convincing account of Turkish wrongs. From the indignation with which he speaks of Armenian and Greek slaughters of Turks one would gather that the Turks were a civilized, gentle race who themselves had never massacred anyone at all. He gives a rather different account of the earlier stages of the revolution than that which I put together in the preceding article. I tried to keep to the political side of the revolution's development. He, as a soldier, is tempted to see it exclusively in terms of war, and to attribute the consolidation of the Anatolian movement to himself and a few other officers who replied to the aggression of Greeks and Armenians by a reorganization of the Army. I got him to give me an outline of the constitution of the Grand National Assembly of Anatolia

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

which sits at Angora, and I obtained confirmation of his account from various other sources.

The Angora Assembly.

The Assembly was got together with the utmost possible speed and evidently with very small attention to the niceties of democratic usage, but with an effort to see that it should be really representative. Speed was essential, as it was needed as an instrument to meet hostilities that had already begun. At the same time and for the same reason its conveners had to make sure that they were basing their actions not on your personal aspiration but actually of the people. They had to know that the people would back the Assembly in whatever it decided. Its members sit by various rights. Members of the Parliament suppressed in Constantinople were given their seats at Angora without further election. Side by side with these sit a large number of delegates elected expressly to the Assembly by districts, and, so Ali Faud says, though I have not had this confirmed, in some cases by professions, doctors selecting their man, and so on. The proportion of actual delegates to members of the old Parliament is about three to one, and there are 400 delegates in all.

Not realizing that the fact might be interpreted in two ways, Ali Fuad, by way of proving the democratic character of the Assembly, told me that his own the batman was elected a member precisely on the same level as himself. The Assembly is both legislative and executive. A certain number of the members have to sit permanently in Angora. Others have to be there not less than four months in the year, being engaged during the rest of the time in administrative post throughout the country. By way of forming a Government, the Assembly elected "Temporary Peoples Commissars" who are directly responsible to it, as also is the army, there being no Commander – in – Chief, but a General Staff which reports to a special committee of the Assembly.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

System of Local Government.

Local government is arranged on a plan something like the Russian, but without the idea of social revolution, without the idea of dominance by anyone class. There is, as in Russia, a cumulative system of assemblies. Groups of villages combine into units of about 10, with a local assembly to manage their affairs. These units send their delegates to a Sanjak Assembly, roughly equivalent to the Soviet of a Russian government or administrative district. The Sanjak Assembly, like the Government Soviet in Russia, has its own complete set of Temporary Peoples Commissars, War, Supply, Agriculture, etc. Connection with the Center is assured by the fact that two of the Sanjak Commissars are appointed from Angora by the National Assembly, and possible friction on this account is lessened by the fact that the Sanjak Assembly has the right to reject three nominations of the Center in succession.

It seems clear that in spite of the obvious democratic intentions of these hand – to – mouth makers of a Constitution there was among them, at all events at first, only a negligible number of out – and – out republicans. A certain Islabut Zekki, reporting as a Communist and trying from that point of view to put a good face on the matter, says that although except among Socialist there was until recently no thought of a republican Government "the turning of the Sultan into a puppet of Anglo –French capitalism," the partition of Anatolia, the revolution in Russia, and events in the East have forced all programs to the Left. He says that the principle of unity between secular and spiritual power has collapsed in the minds of the masses. He even goes so far as to say that all parties now favor republican form, and that not only Socialists but also Left Nationalists talk of a Soviet Republic.

General Ai Fuad gives quite another and more credible view. According to him the bulk of the Angora Assembly is made up of Constitutional Monarchist for whom the Constitution is more important than the monarch. The Sultan is considered necessary, only he must be a good, sensible Sultan who will do what Turkey and not what the Allies told him. I asked him directly what the revolutionaries meant to do with the Sultan (for they assume as axiomatic that they will presently dominate

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Constantinople). He smiled and lit a cigarette. Then he replied with equal directness, "We shall keep him, just as the Russian Revolution instead of destroying old historic monuments and pictures, is even willing to give money for their preservation. Just so we shall preserve him, as if he were an Old Master. He will have the power of the picture; no, perhaps a little more. He will be allowed to hand out decorations and swords of honor. [Ali Fuad is no doubt expecting one of these latter for himself.] Pictures cannot do that. We shall give him enough to live on. We have to keep him, because he is not only Sultan but also Kahlif, and Turkey alone cannot destroy the Khalifate without the sanction of the whole Muslim world. But the members of his family will have no rights other than those common to every citizen of Turkey."

Allegiance to Angora.

Constantinople and Angora being definitely at odds, it remained to be seen which of the two have the allegiance of Turkey. The issue was not long in doubt. One by one, and in small parties, in sailing boats, in disguise, and across the mainland on donkeys, on horseback, on foot, and every possible way, a constant stream of prominent Turks who had escaped deportation to Malta slipped away from Constantinople and went to Angora. There were such unmistakable signs of the tendency of popular feeling as the escape of political prisoners from the jails who went off to Asia Minor, not alone, but accompanied by their jailers. The one famous woman writer of Turkey, Halidi Hanoum once a pupil of the American school of Constantinople, a lady of very considerable influence, traveled on foot and on packhorse, a journey of 22 days, to offer her assistance to the Government that was constituting itself at Angora. Jelaledin, the President of the Parliament that had been destroyed in Constantinople, came to Angora, giving by his presence some sort of legal sanction to the Angora Assembly, of which he became Vice President. Constantinople became simply a marionette show disconnected from the Turkish world, a toy theater of puppets, of which by calling the Angorans to the London Conference, the Allies at last recognized the futility of pulling the strings.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

This recognition, unfortunately, was preceded by many months during which the collapse of the "Kemalists" was prophesied as perseveringly as that of the Bolsheviks had been prophesied at the time when they were daily gaining strength. And during these months, in spite of the traditional enmity between the two races and prodigious mistrust at least on the Russian side, was gradually forged the Russo-Turkish alliance, which is now the dominating fact in Eastern politics from Constantinople to Kabul. The formation of that alliance, in itself a sort of miracle, must be considered as the Allies own handiwork, a direct result of their misjudgment of the Turkish situation on the one hand and the Russian situation on the other. If the Allies had stopped in time their fatal self-deception at Constantinople, or if they had made peace with Russia in 1919, possibly even if we had signed a trade agreement a year before we did, it is difficult to see how that alliance could have come about. But the outlawry of two nations, neighbors of each other, could only have the effect of forcing them into each other's arms for purposes of self – defense.

There was a fatal similarity in their experiences. Internal revolts which they confidently affirm were inspired from without, going so far in some cases as to name the agents employed, were accompanied by the loosing of the terriers of war in the shape of the armies of small nations, provisioned and equipped by the Allies. In both cases they were pressed extremely hard, and in both cases the ultimate result of thus baiting them was merely to strengthen and embitter them. In both cases their enemies very much under – estimated the revolutionary force that was behind them, and would have been extremely astonished by the results that would have followed the collapse of either. With regard to Turkey, for example, it is said that sooner than submit to the Entente and the Sevres Peace the Turks were ready in the last resort to hand over power to the Turkish Communist, thereby, at whatever cost to themselves, giving a quite incalculable impetus to revolutionary movements throughout the East.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. July 20, 1921

**Russian Policy In The East.VI.
Mistrust Of Turks But An Alliance.
Danger To Russia Of United Islam.**

Reval, July 9

The external facts of the Russo-Turkish Alliance are well enough known. The relative position of the two partners seems, however, to have been very generally misunderstood. From the point of view of the future, the most interesting ingredient in that alliance is one of mutual mistrust. The Russians were, of course, pleased by the Turkish rejection of a treaty to which neither the Turkish no Russian revolution had been a party. They were pleased to find new difficulties in the way of their enemies' settlement of the world and their general policy in the East inclined them to help the growth of those difficulties. On the other hand, a strong "bourgeois" Turkey would threaten Russian revolutionary interests as well as European economic interests. There was always the danger that such a Turkey might be bought by Europe for the use against Russia, and this idea, as I shall presently show, is by no means banished from the Russian mind.

The Turks, though afraid of Russian Communist propaganda, were, as the weaker party, at first the more eager to come to an agreement. The Angoran Assembly looked upon Russia as their only possible ally, and were extremely anxious to free themselves from the danger of large – scale hostilities on the eastern front in order to oppose a stronger front to the various foreign troops operating in what they considered to be Turkish territory in the West. Agreement of some kind was forced upon Turk and Russian by the position of the Armenian and Georgian Governments, which threatened them both with foreign intervention. Batum was a base available for use against either Prussia or Turkey. Armenia "Great" on paper was almost a promise that it would be so used. Both the Georgian and Armenian governments were bitterly anti–Communist, and the Armenian Government of Dashnaks (a political

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

party) was for very good reason bitterly anti— Turks as well, and, unfortunately for it, was set up on extending its territory so as to include a considerable Mussulman populations.

Here, of course, were obvious reasons at least for local agreement between Turks and Russians, even in spite of their mutual distrust. This distrust touched even the Armenian question for Moscow, though hostile to the Armenian Government, desired a Sovietized Armenia and had no sort of wish to see the Turks marching into Erivan. Feelers were poured out from the Turkish side with the object of at least preventing Russo-Turkish hostilities and presently the Turkish and Communist armies were acting in accord. The accord was not general, of the Turks evidently had had orders from Angora to do nothing to jeopardize the hoped-for alliance. I will give a single example. In July, 1920 the Armenian Government sent an ultimatum signed by Reuben Ter Minasian (I think their Minister of War) demanding recognition of itself by the Mussulman population of Nahitchewan . The ultimatum promised cultural and religious autonomy, but, ominously demanded that they should give no shelter to Turkish or other Mussulman refugees and that within two weeks they must sell to the Government 300 horses with saddles and 290 head of cattle at fixed prices. Further within six weeks they were to hand over 300,000 poods of rye, of which half was to be paid for at a fixed price and half to be given gratis. Each house was to give up one rifle, in all not less than 7000 rifles with 80 cartridges per rifle, also all guns, machine guns and other munitions of war. The handing over was to begin within 18 hours of acceptance of the ultimatum and to end within 15 days. All troops were to hand over their arms on the first day. Hostages, two from every village and three from each town, were to be taken to Erivan until disarmament was complete.

Russians And Turks Cooperating.

[First two paragraphs unreadable]

The Armenians, following their ultimatum, had advanced into Nahitehevan. Chicherin in a letter to Angora had said that the Armenian – Turkish frontier question would be settled by mediation of Russia. On

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the other hand, a certain Hald, a Turk in Moscow, had written to Kemal some six weeks earlier saying that Russia desired a conflict between the Turks and the Dashnaks. Kazim Karahekir therefore does not know what to do, but writes earnestly begging the Command of the 11th (Soviet) Army for permission to make a general advance "to remove the Dashnak obstacle" for "it seems to me, without any doubt, that the Dashnaks are supporting the Entente." Chicherin, by saying he did not wish to restrain the Turks from attack and encouraged by this seems to have thought that the Communist revolution in our media would have induced the Turks to make territorial concessions by way of showing their goodwill towards Russia. But by that time the Turks had realized that Russia was at least as afraid of their enmity as they were anxious for her friendship, and they contended themselves by sending the Armenians flamboyant congratulations and continuing to steal their cattle.

Making Up to Russia.

Angora, of course, was not equipped with any such long distance policy as that involved in the Communist attitude towards the East. I doubt whether even today, it goes so far as to plan ??? the handful of pan-Turanian enthusiast who are at this moment exploiting the Russo-Turkish alliance with views as to an eventual parting of the ways when Islam shall be strong enough to stand by itself. The men of Angora were faced with immediate problems. They wanted their rear guaranteed by a friendly Power. And they sorely needed shells and cartridges. With these two limited objects they set about making up to Russia. They did it in a characteristic way. In notes which are models of ingenuity they echoed the rhythm and refrain of the notes that were issued from Moscow. They were tireless in insisting that the Anatolian movement was a movement of the "workers and peasants of Turkey." Some of their chief spokesman expressed their belief that the "victory of Bolshevism," not in Turkey of course, but in Western Europe was the only thing that could save the Turkish people from enslavement. Further, they said, in Turkey capital was foreign, and consequently Turkey in fighting the Sevres Peace and the regime of Capitulations was engaged like Russia in the struggle against world capital, and therefore deserved the fullest support. What

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

they asked for was an understanding in the East and military equipment for use in the West. They got the one, and is extremely probable that in one way or other they received a good deal of material supplied originally by the Western Powers, material of which Deniken and Wrangel had had the temporary use.

They would have got both a great deal sooner if it had not been for the eradicated mistrust of the Russians. The Russians seem to have been better informed than the Allies about the position of Turkey's center of gravity or perhaps as an experienced revolutionary Government, they were psychologically better able to make true deductions from their information. They had no doubt that the real force to be reckoned with in Turkey was that of the Angoran Government. They made the mistake, however, of attributing the same perspicacity to the Allies, oddly under – estimating the material influences which by making the reality of Constantinople desirable to the Allies tended to make it credible. Assuming that the Allies, like themselves, realized that Angora was Turkey, and seeing that the Allies did not seem to care much what happened to Armenia, they thought that the Allies would make friends with Angora, give the Turks a free hand in the Southern Caucasus, and with Turkish aid make a general attack on Russians' connections with Central Asia, repaying themselves for the expenses of such action by the seizure of Baku. The Angoran Government would make its way to respectability over the corpses of Russian Communists and would probably get nominal control of Batum.

Some of the leading Communists are still convinced that the alliance with Turkey is a frail thing, and that reconciliation between Angora and the Entente will be accomplished on these lines. Pavlovitch, for example, declares that "England is preparing a front against us from Asia Minor through North East Persia, the Bokharan Mountains, where the Bokharan Emir has taken refuge, the Pamirs, Fergan, and Afghanistan." Of this imaginary front Angora is an essential part.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Turkey and the Allies.

On the other hand were those who urged that "every revolutionary movement in the East begins in Turkey," and that here was the beginning of that conflagration which would burn the houses of their enemies to the ground. If only they could be sure that Angora could not be bought! And there was a party of Communists who, reasoning on lines which could not but appeal to Marxists, assured Moscow that it had nothing to fear, since the material interests involved were such that agreement between Angora and the Allies was out of the question. Of these Communist Skatchko put in and admirably argued report, beginning with a brief analysis of the Sevres Peace. He makes a list of Turkey's prospective losses and concludes: "For Turkey remains only the central part of Asia Minor, deprived of its biggest commercial towns, deprived of all exits to the Mediterranean, deprived of its best Black Seaports, Trebizond and Sanguklak, and deprived of the Baghdad railway. The part of Asia Minor left in the hands of the Turks is deprived of every chance of independent economic existence. In other words, the part of Turkey which remains free politically will inevitably be enslaved by the Entente economically."

That is to say that Turkey cannot agree without suicide. But what if the Allies alter the terms? Skatchko believes that this is impossible. Too much is involved. None of the Allies will give up its share except on a mutual basis, and some will refuse to give up anything. He thinks that Mesopotamia is the key to the situation. No wholesale revision of the treaty is possible while England holds Mesopotamia, and "it is more than enough to read in the English newspapers of the significance of Mesopotamia for England – to hear that triumphal licking of lips – to understand that English Imperialism will not let this tidbit slip from its mouth." And if England is to have Mesopotamia, she must give France Syria, Greece Smyrna and so on and so on. Therefore the struggle between the Turks who have signed the National Pact and the Entente is one to the death, and Moscow can safely become intimate with Angora. Further, until the end of the struggle with Western Europe, the Turkish influence will support in the Caucasian races of feeling friendly to Soviet Russia. And "since the end of that struggle will be the victory

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of world social revolution, there will be no need to worry about any kind of national influence."

He was listen to, yet the very words of that last hopeful sentence of his strikes a note of mistrust of a quite different kind. And if the old fear of the Turkish understanding with the Allies is fading away (Angora's refusal to ratify Bekir's Sami's unauthorized compromise with France contributed to remove it) this new fear is daily growing. What if the Turkish nationalist movement is successful and, covering its aims by friendly professions, extends its influence beyond the mountains to the Caucasus, beyond the Caspian, over the cotton fields of Turkestan, up the Volga, and into the Urals? The Russians would be glad enough to play godfather to a gigantic Muslim movement which would be dangerous to the Allies, but they have no wish to suffer from it themselves. And day by day, as they were moving, readily enough, towards the alliance with Turkey, the curtain was lifting on the stakes of that gamble. For the moment, valuable Turkish help throughout Mohammedan Russia and in neighboring countries of the East form a movement the which seemed risen as if by miracle to carry out for them their Eastern policy. But afterwards, supposing that the social revolution should miss its cue, and Russia be faced not by an ally turned Communist but by a United Islam which by a single word spoken at evening from a minaret could halve the area of Russia during the night?

MG. July 22, 1921.

Russian Policy In The East. VII.

Sham Turkish Communists For Russia's Benefit.

A Real Communists Fate.

As long as the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles are in the hands of capitalist Europe, as long as English squadrons have free passage into the Black See, so long will the Ukraine and Soviet Caucasus bleed to death in a struggle with international counterrevolution and its hirelings. Only from the moment when the whole of the Black See passes into

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Soviet hands, and the red flag of Turkey or the flag of a Soviet Federation of Black Sea States is hoisted over Constantinople, shall we live in peace and be able to give ourselves to creative and constructive work." In this way Pavlovitch, the Communist, translates into Communistic language the Russian tendency towards Constantinople which Mr. Miliukov chose the wrong moment for proclaiming at the beginning of the revolution in the language of the Cadets. Pavlovitch is the mouthpiece of the Third International just as Chichern is the mouthpiece of the Soviet Government. And, if the Soviet Government is ready to encourage and help the Angora Assembly because it is engaged in a struggle the ultimate effect of which may be to weaken European capitalism, the Third International sets before itself the task of turning Turkey Communist in time to prevent the growing Muslim movement of which Angora is coming to be the center from attacking in its strength the ambiguous ally it sought in its weakness.

In reply to Mustapha Kemal, who ask for precise information as to what they would be at, the Turkish Communist (affiliated to the Third International) replied, "Our revolutionary duty is to struggle with the enemies of social revolution, the Entente, both within and without Turkey. But, at the same time, you should know that our task so far as Turkey is concerned is to create from ruined and dismembered Turkey a Socialist Republic of workers and peasants."

The Tactics of Mustapha.

There is no need to point out that this is by no means the wish of Mustapha Kemal and the able young officers who have been the nucleus of the Anatolian movement. But they could hardly say so very loudly at a time when they were doing their very best to persuade the Russians that the Turkish Revolution was the twin brother of the Russian, and therefore deserving the fullest possible help. They therefore set to work to discourage their Communists in their own way, only latterly taking a more vigorous line and at first, while giving them fair words, made use of them in getting Russian's help. For the Anatolian Government, like the Russian, bases its policy upon a gamble, believing that the support of Russia for the Nationalist movement will tide it over the difficult period

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

until it becomes strong enough to stand alone, and that by careful manipulation it can get Russian help while minimizing the risk of weakening the Nationalist movement by the disruptive effects of the growth of internationalism in Turkey.

There is no more curious passage in modern diplomacy that the efforts of the Turkish Nationalist to play to the gallery of the Moscow Communists. I have spoken already of the clever parroting of Communist language in the official notes of the Angora Assembly, of the innocuous adaptation of the Russian form of local government, of the way in which they called their Ministers "Temporary Peoples Commissars." The Turks went very much farther than that. Efforts were made to find a common ground between Mohammedanism and Communism. This was the more necessary lest the religious East should be scandalized at the new infidel alliance. The practical need of the alliance found a curious reflection in the teaching of a religious dogmatic movement, called after the Mullah Abu Zar, who preached that Communism was the real basis of Islam. The Abuzarists have become a considerable political sect, represented in the Angoran Assembly and issuing two newspapers of their own. It is noteworthy that certain of the Indian revolutionaries have been smoothing the way in the same manner by showing that there is at least no contradiction between Islam and Communism, and, comically enough, referring to Elphinstone's description of the quiet and serenity that existed during the reign of Ala-ud-din Khilji, ruled in India 600 years ago, limited farmers to a certain quantity of land and a certain number of servants, and introduced Government control of all kinds, including definite hours for work, uniform closing time for shops, and fixed prices for all necessities.

A "Special" Communist Party.

Both while the Turks were playing up to Moscow they were at the same time trying to sterilize Communist propaganda at home. They put themselves right with Moscow by nominally legalizing the Communist Party in Turkey, but ingeniously manufactured as special Communist Party to meet the needs of the case (I believe this piece of cunning originated with the Young Turks, who, while extremely anti—

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Communist, were before the Anatolians in realizing the possible advantages for Turkey in a Russian alliance), and, judging from frenzied warnings from the real Turkish Communist, I fancy they succeeded in imposing the delegates of this tame domestic party on the exuberant conference of Eastern peoples at Baku in the autumn of last year.

It is not very easy to see why the Turkish Nationalist should have felt it necessary to carry Communist propaganda at all, since from the Communist point of view Turkey, like most of the East, seems the worst possible material. I have waited through a vast morass of reports on the subject, mostly by sanguine agitators who believe that Turkey is on the point of a Communist revolution. They bring small evidence to justify such a belief. With the exception of tramway and dockworkers and a few others in Constantinople and Smyrna who have formed embryonic trade unions, the town population is made up of traders and small craftsmen, working in their own homes and quite unorganized. Some of the reports I have seen compare the Turkish towns with small European towns at the beginning of the industrial period. As for the peasants, the majority seem to be small landowners and consequently not revolutionary. It is true that one report says: "As a result of the mistake of the Government [old Constantinople Government] in giving permission to foreign bankers to make advances on a guarantee of immovable property the peasants have lost their land and in part, getting tied up in their debts, have become the actual slaves of the bankers. As a result of their loss of land peasants had to give 80% of her gains to bankers and beks, and, being unable to exist on the remaining 20%, were being forced every year to emigrate to America and Russia."

But that account, which seems exaggerated, only strengthens the argument of those who assert that the Turkish Revolution cannot but be national and anti-foreign, and that there are no strong motives for a Turkish social revolution since all those against whom there are economic reasons for revolt are not Turks but foreigners. Thus "in Turkey there is not a single Turkish bank" and "small usury is entirely in the hands of Greeks and Armenians." The most moderate and consequently the most credible of the reports I have seen concludes that until the Turkish struggle against foreign capital is finished the "class

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

peace" will not be broken, but then after that there will be a tussle between centralization and decentralization, when the peasants will certainly support the latter and develop some form of Soviet system. The prospect from the point of view of the Third International would not seem to be very encouraging and one would think that the Angora National Assembly could sleep quietly at night. The fact that they do really seem to be worried by fear of Communist propaganda suggests not that there are real grounds for social revolution in Turkey, but that the Angoran Assembly is not entirely at ease about the spirit of the Turkish army. Race hatred, encouraged of course by occasional massacres by the Greeks is definitely discouraged by the Communist as well as by the inevitable war weariness of the Turkish soldiers. And Communist propaganda, suggesting that the war might end if the soldiers took things into their own hands, might produce deplorable results from the point of view of the Angoran Assembly. It is worth remarking that already Turkish Communist of the real party have been accused by Turkish "Communist" of the sham party of indirectly assisting the Greeks.

The Communist Propagandist.

Now Turkish Communist propaganda, though it is now, I believe, 17 centers in Anatolia, is almost exclusively of Russian origin. Most of the Communist apostles in Turkey were Turkish prisoners of war converted while in Russian hands. In Azerbaijan there are regular courses for training Turkish Communist as agitators and propagandist, and the Central Bureau of the Turkish Communist organizations meets at Baku. The Angoran Turks are perfectly aware of this, and take measures to meet it in their own way, never allowing their hostility to the Third International to affect their relations with the Soviet Government. The Soviet Government, for its part, takes no official notice of the occasional misfortunes of Third Internationalists who, like the spies of other countries, take their own risks. The story of the unlucky Subkhi illustrates the attitude of both sides.

Subkhi was the Turkish Communist who spoke for Turkey in March 1919, at the conference in the Kremlin which ended with the foundation of the Third International. An excitable, enthusiastic little man, whom it was

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

unpleasant to look at when he spoke because of his inability to control his face, he became the moving spirit in the Central Bureau which from the Caucasus directed Communist operations in Turkey. The Turkish Nationalist, knowing that Subkhi was thoroughly trusted by the Russians, used him as much as they could during the earlier difficult stages of engineering the Russo – Turkish Alliance. Subkhi had all the simplicity and faith of the convert. He took at their face value, and with exultation transmitted to Moscow, the letters of the Turkish Military Governor of Trebizond. I quote from these letters which, with their mixture of guile and truth, their cunning adaptation of Communist phraseology to quite other purposes, are an excellent example of the methods of Angoran diplomacy. "The Anatolian movement," says the Governor, "full of deep faith and determination, is fighting not only for its own salvation, but for the liberation of the many-million and oppressed East. Its hopes are limited by no national boundaries. In view of the struggle we listened from afar to the voice of truth. That was the first humane voice which reached Anatolia from without. Thereafter our deep sympathy with the country which encouraged us with its secret voice is fully comprehensible and natural." With the delegates to Baku, the Governor wrote: –

Covered with the deep wounds given it by hypocrisy, the East is longing for freedom. The movement which now embraces the whole of Anatolia is purely a movement of liberation. The successes of this movement are a guarantee of the enfranchisement of the East, of the last hour and final ruin of the English and French capitalist Governments. With the fall and the ruin of the Governments of the Entente a new epic will begin in the life of now oppressed humanity, an epic of equality and brotherhood. The hitherto rightless masses of the West and of the East will enjoy a new and free life. The suppression of the revolution in Anatolia and the establishment there of the mastery of the English would inevitably bring with it a strengthening of the latter's authority and despotic rule throughout the whole East. For this reason the leaders of the Anatolian movement are also self – denying fighters for the liberation and happiness of all mankind. The decision of the Turkish Communist party to give us full in every – sided help is an effort towards the liberation of

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

an oppressed people, and that is the fundamental principle of their program.

Subkhi whole-heartedly took this view, and in September last year sent a passionate appeal to Moscow for help, not for the Turkish Communist, but for the Angoran Assembly. He wrote that "occupation by the enemy of Brussa, Adrianople, Bakikseri, and Ismid have contributed to bring about pro-- English revolts inside the country." He was nervous of rumored agreement between the Armenian and Georgian armies, and was excited about the rumor of a proposed landing of 100,000 Armenian volunteers from America. The Anatolian Army was using its last cartridges. It placed all its hopes in the triumph of Bolshevism. Therefore would Moscow please do at least something of what was promised. Yet within a very short time after his writing this letter, when the position of the Turks had improved, when the desired treaty was already secure, in spite of his obvious services to them, the Anatolians felt they no longer needed him as intermediary for their diplomacy, and he became for them no longer a connection with beneficent Russia, but merely a Turkish Communist. In the very Trebizond the Governor of which had written him such flattering letters only a month or two before, the unfortunate Subkhi ended his career, being first bayoneted and then, so it is said, sewn up in the sack and thrown into the sea.

"The Fate Of One. Man."

Subkhi's sad end was, of course, reported to Moscow, but "the fate of one man cannot affect the policy of a revolution" and during the Russian - Turkish Conference which he had certainly done a good deal to bring about, not a word about the death of Subkhi was allowed to interrupt the irreproachable revolutionary sentiments of the Turkish delegates. Not until the treaty was safely signed was he mentioned, and then not by a representative of the Soviet Government but by Pavlovitch of the Third International, who used him to point an attack on the sham Communist party. Pavlovitch this May wrote about the death of Subkhi and some other Communist who were killed with him, and ask "What would be the attitude of the official Communist Party of Angora to these horrors?" On

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

June 3 Dr. Tewfik Rouschidy replied in "Moscow" (a sheet issued in many languages in Moscow for delegates to the Third Congress of the Third International, which is now sitting). Tewfik Rouschidy mentions Subkhi only perfunctorily, but denies at length that his is an official party created for ulterior ends by the Angora Government. "We think," he says, "that the Eastern countries, which as regard large industry are behind the times, will be able to adopt the Communist social system without having to pass through a capitalist phase.... There is the same difference between us and the other Turkish parties as exists between bourgeois democracy and the Communist party. On the other hand we have declared that we shall support with all our might the struggle of the nations against world imperialism, and we have loyally kept our word. By undertaking this task and caring it out we act in absolute conformity with our Communist convictions, for surely we need not mind if among those who are fighting imperialism, which must perish that we should live, there are men who do not profess to be Communist."

Precisely. Dr. Tewfik is the perfect Communist from the point of view of the Angora Assembly, ready to be satisfied with the Soviet forms (which Angora has already approached) but demanding nothing serious in the way of economic change, whole – heartedly concentrated on the national struggle, and consequently unlikely to produce what the Angorans most fear, a split in the unity of the movement. Communist propaganda which should succeed in dividing the nation, especially the army, into "bourgeois" and "proletarian" parties would assuredly smash the Anatolian movement. The Angorans accordingly encouraged Dr. Tewfik Rousehidy and expeditiously make away with the ingenious Subkhi.

Bolshevik Propaganda Not Wanted.

And although in the beginning of the Angoran Foreign Minister and Kemal himself, not to speak of the Governor of Trebizond and Kazim Karabekir, who commanded on the eastern front, produced in all their communications with Russia delightful exercises in the ambiguous use of revolutionary language, the Turks are already learning that they can speak to the Russian Government as man to man, and have no need to

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

pretend to a Communism in which they do not believe. Dr. Fuad, for example (not to be confounded with the General Ah Fuad), expressly warns the Soviet Government against the use of popular propaganda, telling them politely that "in Turkey there is no economic base for the spread of Communism, there is no purely industrial proletariat, the agrarian question is by no means bitter, where for the Communist idea is not a natural deduction from the situation of the Turkish masses, but must be inoculated to a certain extent artificially, not on the grounds of historical materialism but on idealistic grounds. In view of this Communist ideas in Turkey will have to pass not from the masses to the intelligentsia but from the intelligentsia to the masses." He points out the uselessness of opposing Internationalist ideas to the Nationalist enthusiasm on which the Anatolian movement is based, and while delicately insisting that the Russian representative to Angora had better not be an Armenian or a Greek, suggests that he should run his propaganda "from the wider horizon of the struggle of oppressed classes and peoples, with their oppressors." In other words, "Talk as you please to our intellectuals, but be so good as to leave our soldiers alone."

MG. July 26, 1921.

The Woman Who Rules The Afghans.

Recent Attack On India As A Move In A Muslim War.

Remarkable Letter From The Amir's Mother To The Prince Of Bokhara.

Reval, July 18.

In Afghanistan there is no man without personal property. In Kabul, the capital of that fortunate country, the very beggars ride round the bazaar on their own donkeys, soliciting alms from the faithful. It is obviously no fruitful soil for Communism. On the other hand, it is the last of the Mohammedan countries to have preserved its isolation from the infidel, it's complete independence. And for a very long time the Afghans in their mountain towns have watched the English steadily increasing their power on the further side of the ranges, and, to the north and west, have

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

seen the tribes of Central Asia, which once exacted tribute from Moscow, gradually falling under the domination of Russia, until Russian word was law to the very sources of the Oxus, and English word had means to avenge its neglect even on the summits of Chitral.

The Russian Revolution, even if it had had no theories, proclaimed no rights, indulged in no propaganda whatever, would nonetheless have precipitated a crisis by its immediate results, what were a sudden withdrawal of Russian pressure and an advance of English forces right up to Meshed in North – east Persia, and over the Persian frontier into Turkestan to Askhabad and Merv. The old equilibrium of forces was gone in a moment. The Afghans no longer saw themselves guarding their independence in a mountain stronghold between two hostile and gigantic Powers whose mutual jealousies were as valuable as the mountains for the defense of Afghan freedom. Instead, one of these Powers had disappeared, and the other, pressing forward and advancing from wholly new directions, seem to be encircling Afghanistan in a grip the more threatening in that it was not contested by any other enemy. Passionate spirits in Afghanistan believed that the last moment had come, that the two dogs between whom the mountain country had been a bone of contention had decided their struggle, and that the bone which had enjoyed every respite during the mutual growlings of the contestants was now to be chewed up by the dog which seemed to be left in possession of the field. It seemed to them that there was no other choice before them, and that, risking nothing by resistance, they might, with the help Allah, who could not but be on their side against the encroaching infidels, postponed at least for a little the subjection of their country.

A Determined Lady.

This crystallization of feeling in Afghanistan was given vivid dramatic expression in accordance with the customs and manners of the country. The passionate spirits in Afghan politics, in spite of the Muslim seclusion of women, had and have as their leader an inspirer a woman, a most redoubtable, determined lady. Saradjul Khevat, who was at that time the favorite wife of Habihullah Khan, then Amir of Afghanistan.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Habihullah was alike elderly and easy – going. Perhaps he was too elderly to realize the complete change in the circumstances of his State. Perhaps, dimly realizing it, he was too easy-going for the active part which the passionate spirits decided that the Amir should play. It is also said that he was tiring of Saradjul. In any case, he was an obstacle in the way and was removed with that promptitude in such matters which is a fitting contrast to Oriental lassitude in most others.

Saradjul Khevatini is openly said to have arranged the affair. The placid Habibullah on a hunting expedition near Jellalabad, was killed by a bullet while sleeping in his tent. (Another version attributes his death to poison.) The active agent in the matter was one Mustapha Sirdar, and if public suspicion had attached to the politically minded and still beautiful Saradjul, it was duly removed by the subsequent arrest of Mustapha, was brought in chains to Kabul. Public trial might have had awkward consequences. The prisoner might have been indiscreet. Besides, a popular demonstration of loyalty is always desirable. So it happened that a mob collected just in time to intercept the unfortunate Mustapha, who was torn to pieces with every symptom of public disapproval and many pious ejaculations, his fate being doubly useful, alike in leaving that of Habibullah inconvenient mystery and as a warning to any ill-disposed person who might think of using Habibullah's removal as a precedent for the removal of his successor.

The Succession.

[first paragraph unreadable]

Six weeks later the new Amir, Amanulla informed Lenin in a ceremonious letter of his father's death and of his own ascension to the Afghan throne. Amanulla is a young man, still under 30 years of age, very good-looking, amiable, and trained by his mother and an almost fanatic devotion to Islam. So far, at least, he is the instrument, hers the guiding hand, and with his accession to the throne the ideas directing Afghan policy became those of the defence of hard – pressed Islam, the glory of which for 20 years had been his mother's dream. There followed a hurried attempt to form an alliance with Bokhara by means of the loan

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of instructors and gifts of guns, shawls and "English boats, yellow and black." War with England followed the accession of Amanulla as a matter of course, and though in the English newspapers it seemed a troublesome little affair of unruly frontier tribes or at most a by – product of "Bolshevik propaganda," for that group of passionate spirits controlling Afghan affairs it was a war over questions which ranged from Waziristan to Constantinople, from Daghestan to the Persian Gulf. It was an Afghan contribution to the cause of Islam. For the Afghans their country was an outpost of Islam in danger of encirclement, and they fought, precisely like an outpost, not for themselves alone, but quite consciously for the salvation of Islam in the East.

Saradjul's Letter.

I have had in my hands a letter written by Saradjul Khevat in to the Amir of Bokhara, a letter written by one Muslim to another, which so perfectly illustrates the ideology of that struggle and one of the most significant personalities in the East that I make no apology for printing it in full: –

14th Delova, 1298. To Seid Mir Alim, Emir of Bokhara: –

My true, happy, meet – to – be – accompanied. my son, your Imperial Majesty, Lord of Bokhara:

Expressing my devotion to your Imperial Majesty, and following the spiritual instructions of the Prophet, made the blessing of God be upon him, in the strengthening of the true understanding of God and the religious tie of Mussulmans between themselves, I bring to your knowledge, my happy, meet-to-be-accompanied son, that these ties of the religious relationship of all Mussulman's, in the course of several centuries, on account of the loss of unity and mutual knowledge of the Mussulman's rulers and their viziers, have reached an unhappy condition of falling asunder with signs of breaking up and complete disintegration.

Our enemies have made good use of our family disagreements. One by one they have overturned all the Mussulman Governments separately,

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

and the different Mussulman nations that have gradually and severally taken into their iron paws and choked. Let it be no secret from your Imperial Majesty, my son, O Emir of noble Bokhara that in this present age, at this present time, wherever we cast our eyes, throughout the whole world, the conditions of Mussulman Governments and peoples is near to full ruin, to final disappearance from the scene and turning into nothingness.

The sacred places of the Mussulman's, the place of the Khalifate, have been taken from us by force.

The Mussulman's of India, Egypt, noble Arabia, indeed of the whole world, are in the chains of Christendom.

All the Mussulman's of Turkestan, Trans Caspia, Persia, and Afghanistan are deprived of their right to free development. All of them, these Mussulman's, suffer in their souls from such misfortunes, and the hearts of such as I, sitting in corners, and pray for contemplation beyond the veil of the unknown future of Islam, cannot but burn and wither away, feeling the approach of death.

Behold, that is the state of affairs and was the reason why my dear son, Amanulla, on coming to the throne of his ancestors, which he inherited, suffering so many years for the sake of Islam, considered it his first duty to give his country independence and his people freedom, and, in order to give to these strength and durability, getting rid of all kinds of encroachments upon them on the part of that Power which for so many years has worked against us, unsheathed his sword, entered upon war, and, thanks to the all – powerfulness and help of the one and only God, obtained what was necessary.

It would seem that hereby my maternal sufferings for the faith should be ended, and it would seem that already nothing is left for me to watch over the dear health of my son and wish for no more war.

But, setting before my eyes all the misfortunes of the Mussulman's of all the world, I have come to the conclusion that if Afghanistan does not

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

become finally free – that is to say, if my dear son cannot always count on his dear brother of Bokhara and his other Mussulman brothers, and is unable to secure their sympathy and friendship, needful for struggle for the sake of Islam – of affairs are irretrievably lost.

That is why he reserves to himself the exclusive right to a holy war with the infidels.

And that is why he, my son, at this time holds out to you his truly brotherly and solely faithful and friendly hand.

Already there have been between you exchange of messages, of counsels in the spirit of the Koran, and of greetings.

The child of my heart, Amanulla, sets as a first condition of friendship with the Russian Soviet Republic the independence of Bokhara, brotherly and co-religious with ourselves.

Praise be to the true and all – powerful God. Blessed be these times of happiness, unity, and friendship of yours and ours and of all Mussulman's in general. Be strong in obeisance to God. May the Lord God preserve you and Amanulla, and may he give rest to all our Mussulman brothers who have perished – concerning this I pray the Lord God. – The Mother of Amanulla.

The date of this letter was February, 1920, in the third year of the Russian Revolution. Yet it is obvious that here are motives, plans, ideas which have not been touched by Communist propaganda and have not needed any Russian inspiration, though its effects they fall in perfectly with the Eastern policy of Moscow. Here, at the other end of the long belt of Mohammedan peoples, are things stirring which, for their full significance, must be considered in relation with the events in Asia Minor.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. July 27, 1921.

Letter To Lenin From The Afghan Amir.

Forging The First Links In A Great Muslim League.

An Instrument Used By Russia Which May Be Turned Against Herself.

Reval, July 19.

For Saradjul, mother of the Amir of Afghanistan and Muslim devotee, the Russians, whether revolutionary or other, were merely another brand of infidels to be bargained with, as something equally outside the faith but for the moment at least less dangerous than ourselves. Russia, after the revolution, only very gradually acquired her present importance in Afghan politics. It was not until the Turks, representatives of Greater Islam, had smoothed the way that the Afghans realized that the Northern Power which for the preceding 50 years had been dividing Afghan fears with England had not merely crumbled but had performed an extraordinary metamorphosis. The change had, of course, but announced early in 1918, but the habit of fear is not easily broken, and it was easier to believe that one enemy had weakened, leaving another master of the event, then to believe that there was a Russian Government not hostile to Islam but actually prepared to be useful to it. The Afghans were extremely interested but slow to be persuaded.

Since 1877 no Russian envoy had penetrated to Kabul. In the summer of 1919 a Russian mission, held up at Orenburg by the civil war, slipping through a temporary gap in the lines of the Whites, which closed immediately behind it, delayed in Bokhara, turned back from the Afghan frontier at the first attempt, fighting its way through an ambushade arranged for its reception on the River Oxus, kept for weeks in frontier villages on polite pretexts, was at last received with honor and presents of melons, and rode into the capital city of Kabul , where it was lodged in the house that had belonged to the unhappy instrument of Amanulla's succession. Mustapha Sirdar, who besides being torn in pieces by the populace had suffered the confiscation of his property. In the same year an Afghan mission visited Moscow. It included an aged Mullah in a long red caftan. Wherever the mission stopped on its way through Central

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Asia it was greeted with military parades, red flags, and solemn singings of the "International," and this aged cleric in his flaming red seems to have made as much impression on the astonished Russian soldiers as the parades and singing made on the Afghans. Neither mission, in that first year of definite diplomatic relations, seems to have accomplished more than the exchange of cordial sentiments.

Reception of the Mission.

In Kubal the Russian mission was at first regarded with considerable suspicion, though it was warmly welcomed by Makhmud Tarzi, the Foreign Minister, whose third daughter is the wife of the Amir. Makhmud Tarzi calls himself a Socialist, and illustrates his inclination towards Western culture by sitting in pajamas in his Ministry. The first head of the Russian mission was Bravin, not a Communist but a highly qualified Orientalist and a very bitter Anglophobe, a legacy to Soviet Russia from the old regime. He was later replaced by Suritz, who did not conform to Eastern usages, scandalize the Afghans by his inability to ride a horse, but seems to have been more successful than Bravin in bringing the preliminary political flirtations to the point of a definite contract. Bravin has recently been assassinated in Afghanistan.

I fancy that Suritz's success must be partially attributed to changing circumstances, and most of all to the influence of the Turks, who came to Afghanistan promising Saradjuland her friends such a strengthening of the ties of Islam that the minor misfortunes of the Khavin dynasty and of her "meet – to – the –accompanied son, Lord of Bokhara" seemed of small account. The Turks explained how useful Russia could be, at least temporarily, and the Afghans swallowed their misgivings. The Russians at first were not ambitious. The war of intervention was in full swing, and their main aim was to ensure that Afghanistan should not be used against them in any attack on Central Asia. Such an attack seemed to be threatened by our invasion of Turkestan. They wrote: "From the first days of the glorious struggle of the Afghan people for its independence the Workers and Peasants Government of Russia did not hesitate to recognize the new state of affairs, and solidly recognize the complete independence of Afghanistan."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The inference, of course, was that Russia, unlike England, did not require to be fought. The inference was drawn, but at first very doubtfully. The Afghans aware of the Sovietisation of Turkestan and the discontent produced there by the idiocies of a few fanatics continually insisted, as Saradjul said in writing to Bokhara, that a condition of their friendship was the independence of Bokhara and Khiva, just as with us they try to assume a sort of protectorate over Muslim mountain tribes beyond their own frontiers. Khiva became a Republic , it's Lord being removed to Moscow, where he is now in prison, and a Bokhara revolution abetted by Russians said that "meet – to – be– accompanied" Amir flying to the hills. However, the Turks, who were quietly working throughout Central Asia with the immediate object of keeping the East on good terms with Russia and for all ultimate but purposes of their own, smoothed down the Afghan Amir and persuaded him to limit the expression of his disquiet to protests (of which he sent plenty) and to continue in the policy now definitely forming of agreement with Moscow. A preliminary agreement was sketched out, and, as will be seen from the following specimen of the Afghan Amir's later correspondence with Lenin, a time came when it was the Afghans and not the Russians who were pressing for a definite treaty.

The Amir's Letter.

This letter is dated the ninth Kausa, 1299, by solar reckoning, or the beginning of December, 1920: –

To the great, the humane defender of civilization, the sincere protector of Eastern peoples and the friend of the free Afghan State and nation, his Supreme Excellency the President of the great Russian Republic, may Allah preserve him.

On the occasion of the satisfactory ending of the recent negotiations concerning the establishment of a basis of neighborly and friendly relations between the Governments of the Russian Soviet Republic under your High Presidency and my Imperial Government, and their conclusion by a friendly treaty – I congratulate my high friend President

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Lenin, expressing my delight in this matter, and I hope that the aforesaid treaty will be confirmed and its provisions enter into force as speedily as possible.

In view of the fact that the Government of the Russian Soviet Republic has directed its well-intentioned purposes and sympathies towards the overthrow throughout the world of the policy of Imperialism, and especially towards the liberation of the peoples of the East from the despotism of world Imperialist and towards the establishment of conditions in which each people shall itself decide its fate as a State, these matters were in themselves reason for supreme eagerness and for the regulation of relations between my Imperial Government and the Government of the Russian Soviet Republic.

The mutual obligations, which are in the concluded treaty where it concerns that policy, with regard to the assurance and preservation of the complete independence of the Governments of Bokhara and Khiva, we consider also as a material proof of these freedom – loving ideas.

From his Highness Jemal Pasha, who has since been in our capital, we have heard of all the noble ideas and intentions of the Government of the Russian Soviet Republic with regard to the enfranchisement of the whole Eastern world, and of the fact that the aforesaid Government has concluded an alliance with the Government of Turkey, which in the present war has suffered attack of the most unjustifiable kind, and in confirmation of that alliance has given her material and moral help. These explanations and information strengthen and confirm more than ever our hopes and beliefs in the actions of your Government.

The Afghan Government has great hopes concerning this common object, to which it attributes very great significance, and places as the very foundation of its policy this aim, humane with regard to all mankind, and is ready by all means and at all times to pursue the continuance of our mutual friendship. Wherefore the Afghan Government hopes that the sincerity of its ideas and hopes will meet with the respect and trust which it deserves on your high part. And I, in the very strongest manner, hope that, for the sake of the realization of these ideas and hopes, you,

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

in a special way, on your high part will facilitate the efforts that are being made in the attainment of certain immediate possibilities.

The treaty we have concluded established the basis of our sincere relations, and we have no doubt that in future these bases will be still further strengthened and confirmed, and that the attainment of these high mutual aims will justify the desires of both parties.

Since it is my Imperial wish that certain misunderstandings hitherto caused by officials on both sides in the current relations of the two States should be speedily liquidated, necessary instructions have been given to the proper person. I hope that you, on your high part, will be so good as to give similar instructions to the proper persons with the object of facilitating friendly relations.

In particular, I beg you not to refuse to give your instructions that the suggestions made by our Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, concerning certain supplementary agreements, economic and with regard to consular representatives, to confirm and regularize the relations between the two States, should be accepted as speedily as possible.

I hope that the efforts we are making, the object of which is the liberation of the whole Eastern world, will be crowned with success, and I beg you to accept the expression of my extraordinary respect.

Your friend, Amir Amanulla.

The Treaty.

As negotiations proceeded, the passionate spirits of Afghanistan went far beyond the Russians in their plans for agreement. They have secured consulates for themselves in the principal towns of Turkestan and in Kazan, the biggest Mohammedan Center in European Russia. They wanted more. They wanted a treaty that would actually involve Russia in war on their behalf, and for a long time the treaty was held up in Moscow because the Afghans were insisting on a clause whereby Russia

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

should expressly bind herself to permit in all circumstances the free transit of munitions of war, wherever bought, through Russia to Afghanistan. The Russians pointed out but such a clause would involve a breaking of Russian neutrality. That being precisely what the Afghans wanted, they resolutely refused to see it, and the final treaty, good as it is from their point of view, as it provides them with a handsome subsidy besides promising them telegraph lines, etc. was something of a disappointment.

From the Russian point of view the treaty is good enough. It precisely carries out the policy I have already outlined, of treating Eastern peoples in such a way as to place all other Powers at an obvious disadvantage. We can only get level with the Russians in the good books of the Afghans by giving the Amir a similar subsidy, giving him telegraphs on the same terms, and allowing him to have a series of consulates in Northern India, in which case the passionate spirits of Kabul and their Turkish friends would use them for the preparation of the Pan – Islamic movement which is obviously their dream. We, of course, are unlikely to do anything of the sort. For the moment, then, Russia's relations with Afghanistan are secure.

But things have already moved far beyond the stage at which they were when the devout Saradjul prayed for alliance with the Amir of Bokhara. Moscow has made possible something beyond her wildest hopes in the direct alliance between Afghanistan and Turkey, if indeed a triple Islamic alliance including Persia, has not already been formed. The first blows have already been struck in the forging of a gigantic Mohammedan confederation, and Moscow is already grimly conscious that though that Confederation will be at first directed against ourselves, it must eventually be turned against Russia herself.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. August 17, 1921

**The Feeding Of Russia.
Conditions For U. S. Workers.
Mission Held Up At Riga.
The Principle Of Control.**

Riga, Monday.

Today there is no conference between the United States Famine Relief Mission and the Soviet Delegation. Both parties are awaiting Washington's reply proposal sent on Saturday. On the main points agreement that has already been obtained. Americans and Russians agreed not to publish and not to discuss details on which the agreement might not be obtained. It is obvious, however, that difficulties are inevitable over the question of the appointment of Russian personnel in Russia.

Mr. Litvinoff denies the story published here that the Soviet Government demands a Bolshevik majority on the local committees. He says of the Soviet they suggest government organizations under American control, or the Americans own organization under Russian control. He points out that something is already being done and that the creation of a new and wholly independent organization would waste time. He further says the Soviet is willing to let Americans experiment tentatively to see all the way he proposes will work, being convinced that "experience of the actual conditions to Russia will persuade them that no other way is possible and that collaboration on these lines is expedient and indeed inevitable."

I gather that the Americans propose to help the big centers such as Moscow and Petrograd, giving supplementary rations to children there, whereas the Soviet points out that there is greater need in the actual famine districts of the Volga, where the children are without rations, and American help is still more needed.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The interest of the situation is increased today by the arrival of the train carrying representatives of the International Red Cross, including Messrs. Frick, Garvin, and Lodge, thus representing also the Save the Children Fund and international relief credits. These sent a memorandum to Mr. Litvinoff suggesting discussion of the possibilities of help and even credits. Mr. Litvinoff was authorized by Moscow to negotiate. They are going to Reval tonight where Mr. Litvinoff may go also, otherwise there will be a meeting here on Saturday.

Mr. Litvinoff, answering a question, says that these new proposals are independent of the American and do not affect them. "Russia needs so much that she is glad of help from all." Regarding the statements abroad that Senator France is going to negotiate a loan of several billion (thousand million) dollars. Mr. Litvinoff said: "If so, France is acting on his own initiative. Good luck to him. He knows we could do with it."

MG. August 18, 1921.

Famine Relief.

Further Delay At Riga.

A Suspicious Comment.

Delegates Meeting At Last.

Riga, Wednesday.

The "Novy Put" (a newspaper which is generally sympathetic towards the Soviet Government) shows some impatient at the length of the negotiations. In a leading article headed: "Time – Get to Business," it suggests that the information given to the press is insufficient to explain the protracted negotiations, and says (in a tone just a little like that of Chilcherin's notes) that it would seem that with a mass of hungry people on one side and people who want to feed them on the other, there should be no special need for elaborate discussions.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The article continues: "The delay in the negotiations gives ground for believing that beside a desire to help the starving people of the Volga districts, we are concerned here with motives far from humanitarian and of a character having nothing in common with the question of how best to organize the business of help." Journal proceeds to discuss the question of control very much as Mr. Litvinoff discussed it yesterday, and ends by expressing the belief that "practical work will show that there is no need for special guarantees for fruitful activity."

7:40 PM.

The Conference has begun after a series of difficulties. Mr. Hoover's yester-night telegram was followed by a second, causing the postponement of the 4:00 o'clock conference. The American telephoned suggesting 6:00 o'clock. Mr. Litvinoff got the message only after the Americans had abandoned hope of finding him. He went to the Foreign Office at 6:00 o'clock, but found no Americans. Subsequently, Mr. Brown and Mr. Litvinoff met at the rooms of the Relief Administration.

MG. August 19, 1921.

The Russian Famine.

Whole Provinces Without A Blade Of Grass.

The Fatal Second Drought.

Starving Peasants Making For Siberia And The Ukraine.

Efforts To Save The Children

Riga, August 9.

[1st column is unreadable]

In general, a comparison of the émigré press with that issued in Russia is instructive. Both are propagandist, but the latter, nearer to the disaster, seems better to realize what is at stake. In the one you read of the formation of committees to swear at the Bolsheviks and to give help

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

to the hungry. In the other the space given to abuse of the other party is infinitely smaller in comparison with information about what is actually happening and what is being done. The political attitude of the Communist newspapers seems to me to be one of extraordinary faith. Famine is a good basis for agitation, and there seems to be plenty of people willing to use the failure of rain in Russia and the intensified famine as a basis of agitation against the Soviet Government. The Communists quietly supply these people with all the facts they need, and I describe their attitude as one of faith because in their own newspapers they print in prominent places the very ideas that their opponents print abroad and smuggle into Russia for illegal distribution. Thus, in a prominent place in the "Izvestia" you may read a quotation from the French "Figaro" urging that no help should be given to Russia so long as the present Government exists.... "Wherefore, so as not to be tricked, it will be better to give Russia nothing until there has been a clearance there with the help of a new Charlotte Corday."

Frankness of the Official Press.

People abroad, even Russians, have not yet realized that the official Russian newspapers are organs of propaganda issued not for foreign but for home consumption. They assume that the official newspapers are trying to put a good face on the matter. Nothing could be farther from the truth. You cannot make a man less hungry by telling him he has plenty to eat. And, quite apart from that, owing to shortage of paper, there are not enough papers printed in Russia to meet the demand, and consequently, since they are distributed through institutions, they are read in the first place by Communists and their sympathizers and fellow workers. They are used now, as during the war, to stimulate these to full realization of the danger. During the Civil War, when things were going badly, their military reports invariably exaggerated the danger in order to stir people to extraordinary effort. It is the same now. Day after day the papers are full of famine news, and the bulk of the information which finds its way into Europe is taken at first or second hand from the official Russian press. The terrible details I have given have not been smuggled out of Russia through some Bolshevik censorship, but have been taken at random from the "Izvestia" and "Pravda". There, in papers published

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

in hungry Moscow you may read of the tantalizing news of the unattainable stacks of meat rotting at Orenburg. There you may read column after column of reports from the famine stricken districts.

The real difference between this press of Soviet Russia and the newspapers issued abroad is that the official press is issued by people who are conscious that on themselves must fall the brunt of the work of meeting and tempering the catastrophe. They have small time or space to spare for abuse. They analyze in their usual unsentimental manner the motives of those foreign States which are inclined to help Russia and those which frankly hope to profit by their misery, and, as usual, ascribe the ideas of both to the different character of their economic interest. But for the most part they are concerned with what ought to and what can be and what is being done.

What the Government is Doing.

A country already hungry, towns already on short allowance, can do little in the way of feeding the starving, but something can be done in the way of organization, of limiting the appalling spread of disease and death that must result if the Government should fall and the last remains of system should be swept away. I will set down shortly something of what they are doing and trying to do. Semashko, the Minister of Health, points out the danger of disease and the spread of cholera and scurvy, and organizes medical help in so far as that is possible, while the Government does its best to limit and control the elemental fury of the migration of starving people, and to distribute those that can be fed in the places which can feed them. In an article published last year I described the "propaganda trains" used during the Civil War. They are now being used to carry agricultural experts ("agronoms") about the country, to try to do such good as can be done in saving crops. Kinematograph pictures are being taken in the famine districts and exhibited in the Ukraine and other places where there is corn to induce the sending of help. Lists are published of such gifts as are made. Thus we read of a supply committee in the Altai district which has sent 32 wagons of eggs, cheese, butter, and corn by rail, and by water 264,000 poods of corn, 10,000 poods of flour, and 6000 poods of butter. As

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

another example among many, a battalion of the Chresvychaika troops (Extraordinary Commission) in Novgorod gave up each a pound of bread and a month salary, and ran five "Saturdayings" the proceeds of which were for the hungry. The men of the Baltic Fleet are doing an extended "Saturdaying" two weeks' over time work for the same purpose. The total results of these things must be pitiable, but the goodwill is there.

Of course the Communists would not be Communists if they did not seize the occasion to preach solidarity and mutual help and the advantage of working in groups instead of singly. Thus in the Simbirsk government is a small "commune" calling itself "The Road to Socialism." Here 14 women and six men succeed in artificially watering 100 desyatins of land, and from the water and land got 20 times the amount of crop that resulted on the neighboring lands that were left to wait for rain. This performance has been photographed, kinematograph films illustrate it, and the propaganda trains make what use of it they can.

The most important result of the famine has been the compulsory dropping of the system of Government food provision. Government stores of food are being sent to the famine districts, free trade in agricultural products in shops, booths, and markets has been introduced, and people, when they can, by their own food as elsewhere. The great exception is the feeding of children, which is still guaranteed by the Government, and special efforts are being made to save the child population, even in the worst districts, from the full effects of the disaster which is destroying their parents. What it should be realized abroad that the hungry cannot help starving and that each day's delay in the arrival of help from more fortunate country's means another day for the free activity of disease and death, which must sooner or later have an effect in Europe also.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Maxim Gorky's Self Sacrifice.

Looking through the Russian papers, I have tried to pick out things which have not already found their way into the newspapers of the West. But there is one fact which is in no Russian newspaper, a fact which should add force, if that were needed, to Maxim Gorky's appeal for help. A personal friend of Gorky's, who has but recently left Russia, told me that Gorky, who was worn out with work, doing almost alone what should have been done by all Russian writers who care alike for their country and its culture was to have left Russia for the South of Europe to save his health, perhaps his life. When everything was arranged for his departure, realization of the coming famine and belief that it was his duty to stay in Russia and do what he could for this trebly – martyred people made him give up his journey and remain at his self – imposed task. He remained, and those who read his appeal should know that it is the letter of a man who of his own free will stayed to share the famine when he could, like those few émigrés who in Paris and other places have urged that it be left unheard, have left Russia to her fate and been in the safety which they so ignobly employ in reviling him

MG. August 19, 1921.

The Delays At Riga.

Riga, Wednesday, 10 PM

The conference between the Soviet and American representatives has just ended. I have seen both Mr. Brown and Mr. Litvinoff. The letter says an agreement will not be signed before Friday, but the four points at issue are fizzled down to two. The local committees include representatives of all classes, including the Government. Mr. Brown expects to telegraph to Mr. Hoover for a final decision. Mr. Litvinoff's later proposals approximate the American demands.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The question of choice of areas in which to distribute supplies is left to the Americans, the principal being recognized that the main object is to feed the famine districts.

MG. August 20. 1921. #1

**British Properties In Russia.
Mr. Urquart's Mission.**

Riga, Friday.

Mr. Leslie Urquart, of the Irtysh-Kichtim mines, formally a protagonist of intervention, reached Riga yesterday, and left for Moscow last night with three experts and secretaries in order to negotiate the renewal of his concessions. He told Mr. Litvinoff he was more interested in obtaining help for Russia on a large scale by obtaining credits than in his own affairs.

[Mr. Leslie Urquart is the chairman of the Russo-Asiatic Consolidated, which owns vast mining properties in the Urals and Siberia that were confiscated in 1918 by the Soviet Government. Mr. Urquart's journey was undertaken at the invitation of the Moscow Government for the purpose of discussing with them the possibility of restarting works in the Company's mines]

MG. August 20, 1921. #2

**Russia's Relief.
Americans Given All Facilities.
Food Ships Loading.
First Deliveries Next Week.**

Riga, Friday.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The 10 days diplomatic duel between the Soviet and the Russian Relief Mission, watched with impatience by the whole world, has now ended. Honor is satisfied, and the feeding of the hungry may begin. This morning even Mr. Litvinoff, whose attitude was that of looking a gift horse in the mouth, complaining of the sharpness of its teeth and suggesting that it has an uncertain temper, spoke of the possible failure of the negotiations. But at 6:30 Messrs. Brown and Litvinoff left the Foreign Office, kinematographed a cordial handshake and announced that agreement had been reached, the signatures to follow tomorrow. Mr. Carroll told me that nothing would now interfere with food entering. A group of administrators were already starting, and the first lot of food would be delivered next week.

Both Messrs, Brown and Litvinoff say they are thoroughly satisfied with the agreement, which safeguards the Soviet against the possible hostile activities of the personnel and retains the food as the actual property and under the control of the American Relief Administration until it is in the mouths of the hungry children. Mr. Litvinoff said "Though the negotiations were made difficult by mutual distrust that distrust was outside the conference room, not in it." He referred to Mr. Brown's sincere anxiety to get the negotiations over and the feeding begun, and said that for his part he offered to let the Americans start in without an agreement. Russia depositing guarantees abroad, confident that the real desire of the American Relief Administration to help would speedily have brought about an agreement in working much like that now reached. But in Russia were people who feared possible political activities, and in America people who mistrusted the Soviet Government, and a detailed agreement was necessary to reassure both sides so as to ensure smooth working. He referred to delays due to the reference of questions to Washington, but added that he was so sure of the goodwill of the A.R.A. that he was certain if Mr. Brown has had full powers, or if Mr. Hoover had been at Riga, agreement would have been reached in a couple of days. Mr. Brown read the agreement aloud to correspondents.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Points in the Agreement.

The main points of the agreement are: No definite limits to American personnel, with the exception of Americans who were detained in Russia during the period following the Revolution, for whom Soviet approval must be obtained for each individual. As for the Russian personnel, interpreters, local committees, etc., that is left to the absolute discretion of the A.R.A., but Soviet officials may on producing reasons that any activities are not consonant with the A.R.A. contract, demand the dismissal of any individuals. Otherwise all members of the A.R.A. enjoy diplomatic inviolability and freedom of movement.

Soviet officials may, in case of definite knowledge of the illegal activities, search premises in the presence of the chief of the A.R.A. If the search proves unjustified the Soviet official will be punished. The A.R.A. can cancel the agreement at any time. Local governing bodies will be represented on the local committees.

The original Soviet claim to some sort of control is abandoned except in a definite area of operations unspecified. The food goes where the A.R.A. desires, and by definite agreement it will not go to the ordinary population, Army, and officials, but exclusively to children and to sick chosen by the A.R.A.

The A.R.A. brings the food to the Russian frontiers; thereafter the Soviet pays all expenses of transport, etc., excepting the salaries of the A.R.A. officials. The figure of 1 million children is mentioned in the agreement as in Mr. Hoover's original offer. These receive a supplementary ration of 670 calories A full Russian would be 1700 calories Nothing in the agreement prevents the extension of the scheme. Mr. Litvinoff says in the Volga districts there are 8 million children, and since it is a village and not a town population the bulk are not getting rations of any kind, though the efforts are being made to feed the children first, and 138,000 children in the Volga region are already in children's colonies, getting rations.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Political Consequences.

Although there are no politics in the agreement it must have an enormous political effect. It actually allows in Russia, with diplomatic facilities, couriers, etc., a larger number of Americans than are allowed of English under the trade agreement. It brings huge American organization in the closest possible touch with the realities of Russia. It places America's finger on the sorest spot in the post-war Europe, and opens a way to America playing a greater part in saving European civilization than she has played since the day when she entered the war.

Mr. Litvinoff, answering the question: "If America chooses to regard this as her trade agreement, we have no objection." That, however, seems for the moment less significant than the fact that the richest country in the world reaches across an ocean, across a continent, across far wider barriers of political hostilities, to help the poorest. None, of whatever political opinions, but must breathe a sigh of relief at knowing that telegrams are already on the wires to stores throughout Europe; the ships are already loading with milk, rice, cocoa, sugar, and flour to feed some, at least, of those millions of Russian children whose parents are actually abandoning them to give them as orphans a better chance of relief.

MG. August 22, 1921

**Relief Agreement Signed.
Cordial Exchanges.
Children The Dominating Thought.**

Riga, Saturday.

After the comparative secrecy of the negotiations, press correspondents were admitted to witness the signature of the agreement at the Latvian Foreign Office. Mr. W. L. Brown, head of the American Mission, read the text to an accompaniment of purring kinematographs.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Mr. Litvinoff thanked the Latvian Premier, Mr. Meierovitch, for presiding and for again giving the beautiful capital for the negotiations, which, like the Polish peace, had the object of saving human life. The protraction of the negotiations, he added, was not due to any mistrust between Mr. Brown and himself. If Mr. Brown had been less fair-minded the proceedings would have been longer, but Mr. Brown came not to find but to adjust differences. There had been moments of great anxiety, the thought of the bad results of this disagreement had removed all difficulties; and this conference having ended satisfactorily, he hoped other meetings would bring both countries nearer to each other.

Mr. Brown made a deliberately non--political speech. His opening words emphasized that he spoke on behalf of Mr. Hoover and the American Relief Administration. The feeling that there was urgent need to get together because children were waiting to be fed had dominated both sides. Before them was an obviously good aim to attain, and both sides consistently tried to attain it.

Mr. Meierovitch , who also spoke English, hoped this agreement would have the effect of closer understanding between the Russian and American peoples. He spoke enthusiastically of the good work done by the A.R.A .in Latvia, where they have actually changed the expression of the children's faces throughout the country, which, like Russia, had suffered much from war disturbances. He promised that Latvia would do its best to facilitate transport, and said that for the sake of civilization and the interests of all mankind this first step would lead others to develop mutual understanding. He ended by saying that Latvia was glad for humanity's sake to do what she could in mediation between East and West.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. August 23, 1921.

**Dr. Nansen's Department Of Russian Relief.
Concentration On The Prevention Of Famine Next Year.
Confidence In Soviet Organizations.
Why The Governments Must Move Quickly.**

Riga, Monday.

[The first article in this series is unreadable]

SECOND ARTICLE.

**The American Leader in Europe.
Mr. Brown's Plan Of Operations.**

Riga, Monday Night.

Today I had an interview with Mr. Brown, head of the American Relief Administration in Europe, who is going to London tonight. "Our central organization will be established in Moscow, as the seat of Government," he said. "A party is going there on Thursday, and will send skeleton organizations to make the reconnaissances in the various famine districts and investigate the condition of the ports and the possibilities of transport. Outside Russia, the starting point and organizing base will be Riga, but we shall use Novorossisk, Petrograd, and Reval – in fact, all possible ports. In the winter we shall use Libau and Hango, perhaps, as the ice – free Baltic ports. Unfortunately Hango means long line haulage outside Russia; and the Liban line is narrow gauge, which will compel shifting the stuff twice from wagon to wagon."

Ask about the proposal changing of the Liban gauge, and whether this would take a long time, Mr. Brown replied: "The Letts say they could do it in a few days, and doubtless would do what if we told them a considerable proportion of our supplies were coming that way."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

I asked Mr. Brown's opinion upon Dr. Nansen's proposal. He replied: –

"I saw Dr. Nansen on Saturday. His proposal to concentrate on the problem of preventing a reoccurrence of famine next year is the most constructive plan yet put forward. Nothing could be better. Of course, we as a charitable organization could not attempt such work. Our effort is on different lines. Dr. Nansen, however, could do it, and is the man to carry it through. The two organizations would not overlap, though naturally they would have to work more or less in contact, which would not be difficult. You know that yesterday at Geneva, Dr. Gustav Ador announced that all international Red Cross relief would be done on the same conditions as those agreed between the A.R.A. and the Soviet Government."

Dr. Nansen, with six advisers and experts, leave for Moscow tonight. The Save the Children Fund and the international union are organizing relief under Dr. Nansen's general direction, and propose to start at once to convey relief to 10,000 children at any place Dr. Nansen may direct.

THIRD ARTICLE.

**Dr. Nansen Telegraphs To The Pope.
Request For Direct Appeal To Christendom.**

Riga, Monday Evening.

Dr. Nansen has sent the following telegram to the Pope: –

"Action taken by your Holiness in favor of starving millions of Russia, as manifested by letter to Cardinal Secretary of State, encourages me to ask not only for continuance of moral effort but for direct appeal from your Holiness to the charitable of Christendom. The moment is desperate. The life of a great people is in the balance. I am confident that, faced with a heavy task of organizing relief, I shall not ask in vain for direct action from your Holiness –Fridtjof Nansen."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. August 26, 1921.

**Russian Communists Disillusioned.
Private Enterprise Returning.
Changes Hurried On By The Famine.
Experiments In Compromise.**

Riga, Thursday.

With closer contact with the outside world the Soviet Government is moving towards the right at almost dizzy speed. Even the famine news is full of hints of enormous changes that have taken place during the last few months. Thus at Odessa hydroplane flights have been given for fees to private persons, the money going to the famine fund. At Vitebsk theatrical performances have been given, with seats priced at from 1 to 3 pounds of flour, which has been sent to the famine areas. At Gomel there are toll-bars on the bridges, and each equip age going over pays 1000 roubles to the famine fund.

The more Utopian Communist ideas are abandoned, and people again pay for electricity in Petrograd. The Bureau of Travel Permits is abolished, and 25% of the places on the trains are purchasable by anybody at the railway stations. Little steamers on the River Neva now make a charge to passengers, only soldiers and children under six traveling free. These are all logical consequences of the move towards individualism.

A large proportion of the Moscow theaters and circuses are being taken over by private enterprise, including two of the famous art theater studios. Factories are being let to individuals and groups. 65 applications have been received at Petrograd for the varying terms; 35 ex-owners want to establish stocking and glove factories, offering 5% to the Government.

The most unexpected contracts have already been concluded. At Mignon a sweet meat factory has been leased; at Odessa a brewery and an

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

agricultural machine factory have been leased. At Gomel 18 sawmills out of 54 are in private hands. At Tula there are 24 small samovar makers. The most amusing application is that of a company formed by an Orthodox congregation in the Petrograd diocese, supported by the Metropolitan, Veniamin, to rent a candle factory.

Various experiments are being tried to deal with the abnormal financial conditions. Thus at Tomsk a machine factory pays workmen pre-war rates and is supplying goods to workmen at pre-war prices. A skilled workmen gets 25 rubles monthly; 20% is withheld on account of medical attendance, lodging, lighting, and water supplied by the Government. Of the rest 25% is the money according to the rate of exchange (1000 Soviet roubles for 10 kopecks), and 75% in goods at prices established by the Special Equivalents Commission of trades unions.

MG. August 30. 1921.

**Dr. Nansen's Agreement With The Soviet.
Gigantic Urgent Need.**

Riga, Monday.

I saw Dr. Nanson on his arrival from Moscow this morning. He is satisfied with the results of his journey. Mr. Chicherin appointed midnight for the meeting, which was characteristic of the nocturnal habits of the Moscow Foreign Office. Dr. Nanson also saw Kamenoff, Krassin and other officials and has returned with a definite working agreement for voluntary help based on mostly??? in wording with the American agreement.

He also made a formal agreement to negotiate relief credits for the immediate purchase of seed and food, the Russian Government giving bonds with the first charge on assets: in fact, agreeing to precisely the same arrangement as was made with more??? countries in need of

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

assistance. Dr. Nanson obtained the fullest information upon??? of the needs, with detailed figures??? and railway capacities.

Webster, of the Save the Children's Fund, Is going to Saratoff to begin feeding the first??? children. Dr. Nanson is proceeding to London tonight.

Asked what his general impression was Dr. Nanson said that conditions in Moscow were??? no better than last year; they were still very bad was obvious from the undisguised horror of his companions, who were seeing Moscow for the first time. Dr. Nanson is profoundly convinced that voluntary help alone is quite insufficient to deal with the gigantic urgent need of the famine and hopes for the reinforcement of??? help by European governments.

MG. August 31, 1921.

Obstacles To Famine Relief Work.

A Dissolved Committee.

Soviet Suspicions Of Foreign Influences.

Riga, Tuesday.

The dissolution of the Committee of Public Workers is the first example of the inevitable series of difficulties which will be created for those who wish to help the hungry by those who hope to use the famine for political purposes. This is a wholly Russian affair, but similar difficulties will certainly arise with even the best – intentioned foreign organizations if individuals within or without seek to use them for political ends.

This first illuminating difficulty is fortunately on a small scale. The Soviet Government, in agreeing to the creation of the Committee and to its sending a delegation abroad, made the obvious condition that politics be kept out. But Russians abroad immediately attributed political importance to the Committee, published silly rumors about the Committee taking over political power locally, and suggested that

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

foreign Governments should deal with the Committee, not with the Russian Government.

The dissolution of the Committee must be attributed to this external campaign more than to any occurrences inside Russia. The Soviet Government was easily suspicious, easily convinced that people abroad were ready to force a political position on the Committee, and when the Committee itself encouraged these fears by seeming to set more importance on its foreign travel than on working within the country, the Soviet Government, probably more for reasons of foreign than internal policy, dissolved the Committee, simultaneously inviting the members to continue with their actual work for famine relief.

The Soviet Government's official statement does not give this as the main reason, but a sentence from a leading article in the "Pravda" makes the position clear: "The Government, and not the Committee, speaks with foreign Powers."

MG. September 1, 1921.

**Anti-Bolshevik Attack On Dr. Nansen.
His Agreement With The Soviets.
The Dissolved Committee.**

Riga, Wednesday.

The local Russian paper "Sevodanya" makes a violent attack on Dr. Nansen, accompanying it with the statement that Dr. Nansen has said he is unable to work in coordination with the American Relief Administration. That statement directly contradicts a statement made to me both by Mr. Walter Lyman Brown and Dr. Nansen himself. The reason of the attack is that Dr. Nansen, following Mr. Hoover's example, has concluded an agreement with the Soviet Government, which controls the railways, ports, etc through which relief must come, instead of dealing with the non— official public committee, which has since been dissolved..

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The "Sevodanya" even goes so far as to state, on alleged Parisian authority, that Dr. Nansen threatened to resign, and adds that if he did so "it would be a considerable relief for the perishing Russian people."

No better illustration could be wished of the shameless political struggle which will be carried on around the question of feeding Russian children, on one side being those who, regardless of the fate of the starving people, wish to use the famine as a political weapon against the Bolsheviks; and on the other those who, like Dr. Nansen and Mr. Hoover, in this manner own no party smaller than humanity. The "Sevodanya" makes the position still clearer when it demands the foreign Governments should demand the reestablishment of the dissolved public committee under a threat of stoppage of food transports.

MG. September 2, 1921.

**Russia's Starving Children.
Rations Cut Off.
Need Of Hastening Help From Europe.
The Danger Next Year.**

Riga, Thursday.

The news from the famine districts varies considerably. The worst news today is from the Tartar Republic where for lack of supplies children's colonies have been forced to send away 20,000 children and cease supplying 200,000 others who have been hitherto getting children's rations.

According to the Commissariat of Supply the total number of children in the famine districts along the Volga is 9,351,467. From one government after another, urgent requests for the removal of from 3000 to 30,000 children.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

About 30,000 children can be cared for in the governments where the harvest has not failed. The thought of parents, who are glad to see their children go even in present conditions instead of starving before their eyes, should do something towards hastening relief from Europe.

Delay in receiving help from Europe means that the most important task of supplying seed for winter sowing is left to the efforts of Russia herself. For this purpose 9,229,000 poods (332,244,000 pounds) of seed rye are being collected in Russia. Of this 4,135,000 poods have been collected and was partly on the way to the needy districts on August 27. The collection is still proceeding, but is inadequate even if complete.

I fear there can be small hope of preventing the repetition of famine next year. A heroic effort is being made throughout Russia and even in the towns the workmen, who have been underfed for three years are giving contributions.

MG. September 3, 1921.

**Banned Russian Relief Committee.
The Reported Arrests.**

**Riga, Monday.
[Article unreadable on right side of column].**

MG. September 5, 1921.

**Slow Starvation In The Famine Area.
Russians Village Scenes.
Eye-Witness's Account.
Scrambling For The Food On Dung- Heaps.**

Samara, August 30.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

For five months there has been hardly any rainfall here. The soil, in immense stretches of undulating country, is parched into fine powder, so that every vehicle that passes by throws up the voluminous clouds of gray dust. The town is crowded with hungry refugees from outlying farms and villages. Some 7000 or 8000 children who have strayed or have been deserted by their parents have received shelter in "distributing stations," where they get a small daily ration.

In a few weeks' time all spare food will have been consumed, and unless relief comes before then the children will be left to starve.

This afternoon I visited Semenkino, a village of about 200 wooden houses, and some 20 miles from here. Nearly half the houses have been deserted by the owners. I visited one family of eight, who had nothing left to eat except a dozen shriveled tomatoes, a few flat loaves made of grass, sunflower seeds, and melon-rinds. They had killed all their livestock except one horse. They had harnessed the horse to a cart, and the men were about to drive to Samara to sell their last possessions so as to buy food that would keep the family alive for another week or two. I think it will not be long before the entire village is deserted.

When food runs short and a family has nothing left to eat it sells its movable property, subsists for a few more days, and then wanders off with the horse and cart, often not knowing whether, but usually to the nearest big town. Many die of exhaustion on the way. Nearly all the horses are so emaciated that every rib can be seen, and most of them have flyblown sores. Between Samara and Semenkino I saw the dead bodies of about five horses which had dropped on the way. One had dropped a few minutes previously. The cart, loaded up with bedding and other household goods, stood by the roadside. The family of seven persons stood around, listless and pathetic.

Samara itself is a dismal, melodorous town, and the huge crowds of refugees, clothed in filthy, verminous rags, sitting about with expressionless faces or grubbing for odd scraps of food amid heaps of ordure and garbage, are like the creations of some evil nightmare.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. September 14, 1921.

**The Slow Death In Russia's Famine Lands.
Absence Of Violence And Theft.
Eye-Witness's Narrative From The Stricken Provinces.
Where Children Lie Dead And Dying.**

Semlino (Near Samara), September 3.

[First Column is unreadable on the left margin side. Dispatch deals with Samara and the surrounding countryside.]

[Bottom of first column sub title:]

Mother Who Killed Her Child

[first two paragraphs unreadable--go to second column.]

come and look at their misery. Talk about "American relief" makes no impression on them. The famine has lasted too many months, too many unfulfilled promises have been given. As old peasant woman said: "God gives corn to America and none to Russia. He is a very strange God." Another said she never had any luck, her children had not caught the cholera, and instead of dying quickly they would die slowly of starvation. Another began to weep when she said she had two children whom she could not feed. Another said, without showing any kind of emotion, that she killed her child yesterday because she could not continue to feed it.

On the whole, the villagers did not display much grief. Some even laughed as they showed me the repulsive bread, and asked me to taste it. None of them seemed to be in physical pain. I do not think that any of the stories about the multitudes of people driven mad by hunger trekking westwards in panic-stricken migrations, storming towns and trains are true. There is nothing so unlike violence and madness as slow,

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

deliberate, listless, departure of the starving peasants from their villages.

No Violence or Theft.

I have seen several chickens running about freely here in Semekino, but no one seemed to think of stealing them. On the way to Samara is a communal farm that supports 10 families. It is built near a deep depression at the bottom of which there are bushes and green grass. I entered the dwelling – house and the oldest man there offered me milk, rye bread, and sunflower seeds with true Russian hospitality. It was impossible to refuse without hurting him deeply.

A fairly large flock was grazing in the hollow. A few hundred yards away the dusty processions of refugees have been moving slowly by for weeks. But the prosperous little farm has not been stormed, and it's plentiful store of food devoured by famished people. A strong well – fed man who goes without food for a few days may grow desperate with hunger, but those who starve slowly for months on end do not grow desperate. They grow weaker and weaker in body and soul, and if they are not carried away by disease they pass, almost imperceptibly, from life to death.

Grim Scenes In Samara.

Samara, September 4.

When the refugees arrived at Samara they join one of the so-called camps either in and around the railway station or on the Volga bank. These camps are nothing but shelter-less conglomerations of innumerable families who squat round their pile of household goods and wait until a train can take them to some part of Russia where there is no famine. Evacuation trains run irregularly, and are always overcrowded. Some families have to wait many days or even many weeks before they can get a place. There is no organization equal to the task of dealing with the great multitudes of hungry people who arrive more quickly than they can be evacuated.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

There is no cleanliness and no sanitary arrangements. The railway station and open spaces round it are pervaded by evil stench. Track, platform, and cobbles are littered with refuse and oozing sewage. And on this bed of filth the verminous, malodorous, and squalid mass of starving men, women, and children sit amid swarms of buzzing flies. Even the dogs are lean. The horses show every rib in their bodies, and many of them are motionless, with closed eyes, too weak even to brush away the flies that throng in a festering sores.

Most of the people are too filthy to show whether they are pale or not, but many of the children are dreadful to look at. This afternoon I noticed a bundle of rags stirring slightly amid a heap of rubbish and refuse. I approached and a boy of about 15 looked up at me. The skin was drawn tightly over his pinched face. His eyes were like two slits. His face was ashen grey. His grey lips were shriveled so as to bare his teeth in a horrible manner. He looked down again, his pointed nose almost touching the rubbish heap. His grey hands moved feebly amongst the ordure and garbage. He found a piece of green melon rind. He took it in the flat of one hand and scraped off the shriveled fleshy part with his teeth.

Dead Bodies Lying About.

The weather has been warm and dry, although the nights are cool. Nevertheless, there is much mortality amongst the refugees. The first frosty night will kill great numbers of them. The dead are often left lying a long time before they are removed. I saw the body of a little child lying almost naked in the station and livid with decay. A swarm of flies was buzzing around a fetid sore on its back.

A dead boy was lying stretched across the pavement of a frequented street. People walked around him quite indifferently as they passed by. Only an old woman peered inquisitively into his lifeless face, and then went her way. The sight was far too familiar for anyone to take much notice.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

An elderly man too weak to stand was dragging himself slowly across the street in a sitting posture. A boy was lying on the railway track as a train approached. There was some shouting, and he was lifted out of the way of the train. The limp body of what was once a big, burly man was carried away on a stretcher.

Many of the refugees on the Volga bank are German immigrants from the "Volga colonies." They were particularly hard-hit by the requisitioning done by the Red Army. They generally ran their farms more efficiently than the Russian peasant, and laid up sufficient store of corn to tide over a bad harvest. But last year the Red Army took all they had, and now they are completely destitute.

Those I spoke to were far less patient, resigned, and fatalistic than the Russians. They were also much cleaner. They all seemed to have some idea where they ought to go to. Some wanted to go to Omsk some to Minsk, some to Moscow. Some even dreamt of returning to Germany. At the same time they all realized how dark their future was. "The Government promised us bread and freedom," said one of them bitterly. "We haven't got bread, but we are free to die of starvation."

There misery often found expression in violent abuse of the Government. Many of their children were in a dreadful condition. I saw one little girl two or three years old who had a minute, shriveled face almost like an old woman's. Her limbs were like a thin, fragile sticks. Her small belly was swelling abnormally. Her flesh was pasty and flaccid. She looked horribly grotesque, like some impish monstrosity, something between a human abortion and a hairless monkey..

The Distributing Center.

There were many children like this, but I did not see any with a huge swollen heads I often saw in Germany before the effects of the blockade had begun to wear away. Children who are lost or deliberately abandoned by their parents in the streets of Samara are brought to the "distributing station," which now holds some four or five hundred. I saw

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

none suffering from cholera, but a few have typhus. They were all dirty and clothed in rags. Most of them were terribly emaciated.

One little boy, withdrawn, pinched face and big expressionless eyes, seemed too weak to smile or cry, but when he received a piece of chocolate the faintest shadow of a smile flitted almost imperceptibly across his face as he pushed it feebly into his mouth. The whimpering and wailing of children weakened by hunger filled the whole building.

There was only one doctor present. He has several female assistants, but they, too, are half starved and overworked and can do little even with the best will. There is no soap, no fuel, no medicine, so the children can neither be washed nor receive medical treatment. Five or six die every day.

On the banks of the Volga, a few miles from Samara, are several "sanatoria," "children's colonies," or "forest schools," where the admirable educational ideas of the present Russian Government were beginning to materialize. These institutes are fine country houses, formerly the private property of wealthy Samara merchants. They are built in little patches of forest and overlook the river. But lack of food and fuel is emptying them one after another. The children are packed into carts and taken to Samara, where they are absorbed by the amorphous mass of misery and destitution.

Plenty of Food for Money.

It is not everyone who is hungry at Samara. No one with money need starve. Today the big market is crowded with barrows and booths where all kinds of food are sold very much more cheaply than in Moscow. There is a long line of braziers on which sausages are frying. Behind one of them a man is standing with a rifle, no doubt imagining the refugees maddened with hunger will try to steal his sausages. The precaution is unnecessary. Most of the refugees keep huddled together in one mass waiting for the evacuation train. Only a few, and perhaps most of these few are professional beggars, wander between the stalls, whining meekly for food.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

There are several restaurants in the town, where the cooking is far superior to that of even the best restaurants in most English provincial towns. All day until late at night hungry people stand outside the windows, without complaint or violence, and stare with listless eyes as the guests who eat the plentiful food that is consumed within.

MG. September 20, 1921.

**The Starving Millions Of Russia.
Necessity Of Feeding The Villages.
Work The Red Army Might Do.
Heat And Drought The Main Causes Of The Famine.**

Moscow, September 8.

[First column unreadable.]

[Subtitle at bottom of first column]

**The Soldiers in the Famine Area.
[Text starts at second column].**

Moscow, September 8.

One illusion of about the famine still seems to persist. It has not produced a panic of waves of mass migration. Even if there were no relief, and if 20 or 30 millions of people were really left to die of starvation, there would be no rush of hunger – maddened people across Russia into Poland and Central Europe, bearing with them disease and anarchy.

Even leading persons in the Russian Government, while abusing the Western Powers for giving relief not through pure philanthropy but through self-interest as well, appeal to their self-interest by describing the imaginary dangers of a new "migration of the peoples" that will

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

overwhelm Western Europe and "destroy civilization." The bare fact is that many millions of people are slowly starving to death, and that alone should be sufficient to call for all possible help without the additional stimulus of immediate commercial concessions or of future menaces.

The Peasants Limited "Trek."

When the Russian peasant has nothing left to eat he packs his horse and cart and moves off in the hope of finding food elsewhere. If his emaciated horse can take him 50 miles he is lucky. If it drops dead and he has strength enough left to wander on for another 50 miles he is still luckier. Samara is in the middle of the famine area. Only the very few refugees who could beg or steal food on the way would reach Moscow, which is 500 miles off. Still fewer would reach Warsaw, which is another 700 miles off. Most of the evacuation trains provided by the Russian Government take refugees eastwards to Turkestan or Siberia, but it is very unlikely that more than half a million people will have been evacuated by the end of the year.

At present the epidemics in the famine area are not severe, judged by Russian standards. Until one or two months ago there was much cholera. The cholera statistics issued by the Government are of little use, for they only give the number of cases notified. Most of the peasants do not know the name of cholera, and very few ever trouble to notify a case. For a period of several weeks at least 200 people must have died of cholera every day in the city of Samara alone, which has about 150,000 inhabitants (not including refugees). The epidemic has now subsided. There is at present little more typhus than is usual in Russia, but when the winter comes it is sure to spread enormously.

The Abnormal Weather.

The main causes of the famine are the excessive heat and drought of the summer months. The following figures relating to the Government of Samara are supplied by the President of the Samara Soviet, and are probably accurate. They show how much more unfavorable the weather has been this year as compared with other years: –

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Average temperature of the air (centigrade).

April-May-June.

Average for last 17 years	6.4	16.2	23.7
This year	12.4	24.7	31.1

Rainfall (in millimeters).

Average for the last 17 years

	2.7	38.8	46.9
This year	1.7	0.3	5.1

But other causes have intensified the disaster – the Great War, the Revolution, and, most of all, the interventionist policy of England, France, America, and the Russian Monarchist that postpone Russia's recovery from war and revolution, devastated some of her richest provinces, cut her off from foreign supplies kept great numbers of her workmen in unproductive employment, and absorbed what little transport the Great War had left her. The famine would have been terrible enough by reason of the drought alone, but because of these things many thousands of Russians who would otherwise have survived are doomed to a death of starvation.

Koltchak and Denikin requisitioned thoroughly, and the Red Army requisitioned equally thoroughly. Neither Koltchak nor Denikin ever reached Samara, but the Red Army did, and that is one reason why the famine began before the drought. The Red Army took nearly all the grain that had been laid aside for days of shortage, and when the peasants of Samara province rose against the requisitioning's the insurrection was suppressed with much bloodshed.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. September 22, 1921.

**Among The Doomed Hosts On The Banks Of The Volga.
The Problem Of Transport By Water.**

Moscow, Wednesday.

After reaching Moscow, I went immediately to Samara, and thence traveled through the famine districts down the Volga and up again to the junction with the River Kama, then over the shallows – which are practically stopping Volga navigation between the upper and lower river except for the smallest steamers – up to Kazan . Here I met the first American food train, which arrived at Kazan late on Saturday night and began unloading on Sunday.

Kazan, where the Americans are beginning work, shows at first sight less signs of famine than Samara. One does not hear in the station and town that terrible, continual wailing of children. One does not see in the town itself masses of refugees camping in the open air, awaiting food or death. I am, however, persuaded that the need is actually greater and more urgent at Kazan.

I talked with the Premier and President of the Tartar Republic, of which Kazan is the capital, and after a thorough examination of the town, seeing what is actually being done in rescuing, clothing, and feeding the children, I went into details of the situation with Kazakov, the vice president of the Executive Committee, who has special charge of children's relief. We had a map spread before us. The outstanding fact is that for the Tartar Republic the Volga and Kama Rivers are the main roads of communication. The railway through Kazan to Ekaterinburg cuts across the north – western corner of the Republic. The railway from Simbirsk, itself starving, just touches the south-eastern corner. Everywhere else communications consist on roads based not on the modern centers but on the ancient waterway. When that waterway is closed by ice the main famine areas of the Republic will be hermetically sealed, and those who remain in them will be cut off from serious help of any kind.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

The River Blocked.

Things are bad enough already owing to the drought. The Volga is lower than it has been in human memory. At Bogorodsk, a river station just above the junction of the Kama and the Volga, I found a mass of waiting crowded steamers, held up because they were unable to pass the shallows between Bororodsk and Kazan. I had myself to change from a tug to a little steamer drawing less than 4 feet of water, which had to go up the river sounding every few yards till above the sandbanks. The wind is from the south, and the coming rain will open the river again for a few weeks, when the ice will close it for the long months of winter. All the food intended to be given during the winter must be already moving on the rivers during the coming months.

The Tartar Republic has succeeded better than Samara in shifting the mass of refugees about the town, but so far as supplies are concerned is actually in a worse condition for meeting the famine. It should be remembered that this was the scene of the marching's and counter-marching's of the Czechoslovaks and Koltchak's troops, and it has scarcely had time to recover. Bridges have been rebuilt and railways repaired, and this year a considerable quantity of oil has been brought up the river, but the bulk of the male population took part in the war and agriculture suffered from the drought.

**[Left side of column unreadable for
three paragraphs.]**

[New section.]

No Medicine for the Sick.

The sick have the first call on the food, though the cholera is now lessening, 30% of the sufferers have died because there are no medicaments, not even aspirin or quinine. This utterly adequate help is the best that can be given by the Soviet authorities, many of whom, as I saw myself, are actually living in the refugees' camps and with house-

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

ridden starving children. The help touches only a minute proportion of the suffering multitudes.

I have seen some of the others, and can never forget the roadheads on the Volga banks, where the shore is dotted with little fires made by people cooking pumpkin rind, horse dung, refuse of all kinds, and facing frosty night's without shelter, except, perhaps that of an overturned boat or ragged blanket stretched on the sick to keep off the bitter wind which in bringing them death is bringing them the only relief they will ever get unless food is brought to Kazan and sent down the waterways in time. For thousands upon thousands no human power can bring food in time. Many of those to whom I talked last week must be already dead.

MG. September 24, 1921.

The British Protest To Russia.

"Based On False Information."

Polish Hostility.

Chicherin's Serious View Of The Outlook.

Moscow, Friday.

Tonight I interviewed M. Chicherin in regard to the new crisis in Poland. I found him much disturbed and inclined to believe in a complete change in general European policy towards Russia. He said: "I cannot help believing that we are witnessing the beginning of a new wave of interventionist policy in which even England is involved."

Ask for his reasons, he showed me a press telegram containing parts of the Note presented to him some days ago by Mr. Hodgson. He said Mr. Hodgson told him that the Note would not be published, but the press message shows that part of it was published in England, possibly all.

Chicherin says that the Note, in the form presented, contained a mass of accusations against the Soviet, obviously based on false information. Thus Stalin, the Commissariat for nationality, is mentioned as an official

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of the Third International, which he is not. Eliara is mentioned as the chief of a department which does not exist. Nuorteva is described as making a report in the summer when he was imprisoned in March, and is still in jail.

The Note accused the Soviet Government of urging Angora to hostilities against England, on which Chichern commented: "Personally I brought about a meeting between Hodgson and Ali Fund, the Turkish Ambassador here, to give them the possibility of coming together and exchanging views." Further, Chicherin said that Rothstein is accused of trying to stir up revolution in Persia when it is obvious that any such revolution would completely contradict Russian policy.

Summing up, Chicherin said: "The Note shows that Britain is again willing to accept false information about us in spite of Lloyd George's repeated statement that we were fulfilling our share of the agreement." This fact suggests a change in British policy and consequently gives greater significance to the steps taken by France in inciting a new war."

I asked about the actual position with the Poles. Chicherin gave me a long list of instances showing Polish non-fulfillment of treaty terms, of which I select only one. The Russian Frontier Commission, finding their telephone tapped by a strange wire, invited the Polish Commission to follow this wire, which they did, and found it led to a barn where there was a detachment of 16 of the soldiers of General Balakhovitch (the anti-Bolshevik leader).

During the first period after the treaty ratification it seemed that the Poles meant to fulfill, and to suppress the Savinkoff organization, but Savinkoff went to Paris, succeeded in getting the support of the French Government, and returned to Poland. His friends were given important posts, and he was in close contact with the Polish General Staff. All threads from conspiracies discovered here led to his organization in Poland. Latterly, continual attempts have been made to prevent the collection of food for the hungry districts, and trains of food have been derailed by agents set across the Polish frontier.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

"Even so," said Chicherin, "until quite likely we had no idea that Poland was consciously preparing a rupture. The Polish Ambassador Plrilppovitch returned from Poland after a slight crisis, and things were normal. A few days after his return he gave me a verbal moderate note vaguely in the form of an ultimatum. I replied suggesting parallelism, saying we would at once begin handing over what they demanded. They, on their side, to begin the liquidation of the Savinkoff organizations. They replied with a definite ultimatum, including demands which, even if willing, we could not fulfill for physical reasons.

It is interesting to notice that in these stages in the increasing hostility of the Polish attitude correspond with the stages, and the Polish Cabinet crisis which is ended with the collapse of Parliamentary Government and the concentration of power in the hands of Pilsudski."

I asked: "But why does Pilsudski want war?"

Chicherin replied: "Pilsudski is a small bourgeois romantic, full of old Polish literature and dreaming of entering Moscow. He was first an Austrian tool, and is now a French tool, but now, and then, he is the same romantic Pilsudski, unconscious that he is the tool of anyone."

MG. September 29, 1921.

Famine Relief Along Volga.

Children's Committees In The Homes.

Fine Work Of Peasants And Global Authorities.

Moscow, Saturday

[right margin area at the beginning partially unreadable..

Moscow, Saturday.

Mr. Webster, of the Save the Children Fund, has returned from an

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

extended trip of the Saratoff government, the Fund is organizing immediate relief for 100,000 children. The program will be extended to 250,000. Already arrangements have been made to feed 30,000 in Saratoff town, and 10,000 in each of the following; Ouvesda, Khalinsk, Volsk, ??? and Kamyshin, on the right bank of the Volga, and Pokrovsk, Dergatchy, and ??? on the eastern bank, covering a distance of 300 miles north and south along the ??? and the 150 miles east and west

These seven are worst of the villages of the Saratoff government, the other six can look after themselves for the next three or four months although in a normal year they would be considered districts. At Khalinsk, Dergatchy Novouzinsk there are no crops of any kind.

Mr. Webster expressed surprise at the amount of relief work already being done. At Saratoff 20,000 children are being fed daily, though inadequately, and the authorities have kitchens etc. ready ??? could be open if only they had food ??? the children's homes control ??? formed of the elder children to ??? the amount of food, and in some cases to control the stock-books. No one ??? to suspect them of diverting their own food to the Red Army or elsewhere. Mr. Webster proposes to use the same system.

I asked about the winter sowings, and Mr. Webster corroborated my own observations. Higher up the river the Government has actually succeeded in getting a considerable quantity of seed not only to the peasants, but actually into the ground.

"It is impossible," Mr. Webster said, "not to admire the heroism of the peasants, while themselves hungry, are yet sowing, not eating the seed. In places where the horses are all dead the peasants are digging the ground with spades, putting seed in even at night with the help of lanterns. The estimates vary about the amount sown. The highest estimate says about 15% more than last year, and the lowest estimate 15% less. Now a campaign is in full swing to get land for the spring sowing's plowed before the snow comes, lest the horses all die during the winter. The last three or four weeks have been exceptionally favorable, and in many places shoots are already showing, much to the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

encouragement of the peasants, who were inclined to fear that the seed brought from distant parts of the country would prove unsuitable."

With regard to the attitude of the local authorities, Mr. Webster said: "They simply fell over each other in their efforts to help, and if all the work actually goes through with even 75% of the seed and ease of the preliminary organization I shall be more than satisfied."

MG September 30, 1921

**Lord Curzon's Charges Against Russia.
Based On Forgeries?
Illustrated Reply In Preparation.**

Reval, Wednesday.

It is rumored that Russia's reply to Lord Curzon's Note will set a new precedent in diplomatic correspondence, since it is likely to be accompanied by photographic illustrations. The Russians were puzzled by the circumstantial errors already pointed out in the accusations contained in the British Note and late yesterday, when they noticed the similarity between some of these errors and the errors in false documents fabricated some time ago by Pyornryion in Berlin. The Russians are in possession of an immense press of German spy reports, which, after being offered to various Governments, were printed and sold in the form of a bulletin to German bankers and others interested. Yesterday evening they began a systematic comparison, and came to the conclusion that certain instances in the Lord Curzon's Note were based on this material.

Karl Radek, in this morning's "Pravda," describes the German organization, and states that Weissmann, its director, was not above getting assistance from Radek's friends while Radek was in prison, and in exchange for that assistance giving Radek opportunities for his political activities while in prison. The article alleges that this man is

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the source of Lord Curzon's information. A second article appears tomorrow setting side-by-side the German originals and passages in the English Note, together with facts tending to prove that the German originals were forgeries made by people not sufficiently intimate with Russian affairs to avoid betraying their ignorance.

MG. October 6, 1921.

On The Road To Famine.

Mr. Ransome's Diary Of The Stricken Area.

**The Volga – Where Some Children Still Have Strength To Beg.
Orenburg-Where They "Simply Wait And Die."**

[From the Famine Region]

These notes are copied from a diary kept by myself during the journey through the famine areas of Russia, in company with a photographer, Mr. George Ercole of the Pathe News, New York. We went from Riga to Moscow. Two days after reaching Moscow we were already on our way farther, and, traveling continually, went to Samara, thence down the River Volga to visit villages on the Volga banks, back again to Samara, then up the river past Simbirsk to Bogorodsk, the junction station on the river for the traffic between the Kama and the Volga, then up to Kazan, and so back to Moscow. We were given every facility and complete freedom of movement, talking with peasants, with the starving, with everybody whom we met. We both know Russian, and it would have been difficult to hide the actual state of affairs from us even if the Soviet authorities had tried. They did not try.

I should say at once that I had been present in Riga during the negotiations between the American Relief Administration and the Soviet authorities, had witnessed the signing of the agreement between the two, had talked with Nansen both before and after his visit to Moscow, and had read with amazement of the appointment of M. Noulens, the French Ambassador in Russia in 1918 (famous as a protagonist of armed

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

action against the Soviet Government), as president of the International Commission for the Relief of the Famine. Before I left Riga it had already become clear that there would be a struggle between those who wished in the first place to relieve the famine and those who wished to profit by the famine for the purpose of further intervention, disguised or undisguised. The first steps of the latter had already been taken. There is little need to say that my own sympathies are entirely with Hoover and Nansen, who alike set humanity above politics and think more of the starving children of the Volga than of the hopes of émigré Russians to profit by that starvation.

After pushing our way through the immense crowd of people encumbering the floor of the Ryazan Station in Moscow, we found our place in the sleeping car and left Moscow on the stroke of 9:30. We were both ill, with fever and violent colds and got to bed as soon as we could. The carriage was very dirty, and though I slept very well in the sleeping bag. Ercole, on the lower berth, less well fortified against the invasion, fought bugs steadily till four in the morning when he too fell asleep.

The Horror of the Plains.

Next day we were already well on our way. We cooked up some corned beef in a frying pan over some methylated spirit, and made tea, but were too ill to take much interest in the country. By afternoon we were moving over a landscape quite unlike that of Western Russia. I looked out of the window at the enormous plain, seeing now and again a rare village of wooden huts surrounded by perfectly flat country stretching to the horizon without sign of trees. I can imagine no more appalling horror than to live in such a place, except perhaps for a very simple minded man with a perfectly clear conscience. Nowhere to hide. I realized how it is to be shut in privately by trees as in England. Here, I felt I would go mad, walk and walk until I came to a tree and hang myself up on it if I had the strength left. And how much worst to live in such a landscape when the crops are burnt or have not ripened, and, as I saw, so short

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

that the cattle are turned out to eat them, when there is no food and no prospect of food, nothing but the endless plain beneath, the endless sky above, and no shelter from heartless immensity but death, perhaps only the gate to an immensity no less overpowering.

When we stopped at wayside stations we saw new types of faces, Khirghiz, Mordvin, and Tartar types selling milk in dark earthenware vases, little girls weighing out apples with primitive weighing bars, and an extraordinary mixture of costumes. I saw men walking about with white shirts hanging outside ordinary cavalry breeches, the long coats of the Tartars, fur hats, sheepskin coats, bright handkerchiefs, gold embroidered skullcaps, the ragged uniforms of the Red Army, here and there only the smart new uniform with the red slashing's across the breast, civilian clothes in all stages of disrepair, down to trousers of khaki patched in a rather dandified manner with green and mottled plush ripped from the cushions of the old first – class railway carriages.

So far we were still far from the famine country. But in the evening a little man with curly black hair and a curly red beard knocked at the door of our compartment and ask for me. He had heard in Moscow from a mutual friend that I was going down to Samara to investigate the famine, and introduced himself as the vice president of the Council of Labor and Defense of the Khirghiz Republic, the capital of which is Orenburg, Would I not come on from Samara to Orenburg, to tell the Western world of these millions of Khirghiz for whom no help is in sight, for whom no help is possible unless it comes from the West? The republic stretches from the Urals to the Caspian Sea, and its people live mostly by cattle pasturing, and have been forced by the drought to kill their beasts. They have nothing before them but death.

Feeding Points but no Food.

I asked him what they had in the way of feeding points. He replied, "We have feeding points, but no food. We care as we can for some of the children, but we simply have not got the food, and are surrounded by corn-growing countries which like ourselves have been stricken by the drought and can give us nothing. Help from abroad is the only thing that

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

can save us." I asked about disease. "With regard to cholera it is already less than it was, and as for typhus, practically everybody had it after the war, so we do not expect it to be very bad. But already plague is showing in the south, down by the Caspian Sea." He begged me again to come. "We will put a motor – car at your disposal so that you can see as much as possible in the shortest possible time. I will see about a lodging for you myself. When you have finished in Samara telegraph to me and I will meet you at the station. In Samara they are getting help. But for us there can be no help unless you tell people abroad of our need." Well, we did not go to Orenburg and I do the best I can for him by putting down his appeal to me exactly as he made it. Orenburg, Uralsk, Tsaritsin, Bugulina, Buzuluk, Simbirsk-one might continue the list indefinitely of places where men like my little fellow of the red beard and thin cheeks and the blue, eager eyes would put up a similar appeal, each one conscious, desperately conscious, of the desolation of his own district, each one believing enviously that the others were getting help, each one hoping vainly that a word here or a word there would bring the help that simply cannot be brought in time.

A Child's Voice.

At evening we were in a station, and for the first time I heard that pitiful wailing which during the rest of the journey was to be the continual accompaniment of all our work. A child's voice outside the window cried continually. "Uncle, little uncle, give a scrap of bread. Uncle, little uncle give a scrap of bread." The little man from Orenburg was beside me. "You will not hear that in Orenburg." he said. "Here they have strength to ask. There they simply wait and die."

At night I took more aspirin and lay on my berth sweating and tossing with headache and sore throat, watching Ercole fighting bugs below, and feeling ashamed of myself for noticing my little woes in the presence of a sea of misery as wide, as changeless, and as hopeless as the plains.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. October 7, 1921.

Famine

"Give A Little Bit Of Bread."

The Cry Of The Starving Children Of Samara.

[From the Famine Region]

The Volga is a wide, dreary stream, with villages and white churches on its banks and huge sand flats showing above the water, dry and powdery in the wind. Beyond the Volga a mile of comparatively fertile country, with trees, and then again the endless plain. Far on the horizon we would notice a trekking caravan of refugees, two or three carts with led horses, two or three boys riding bareback. Those were the lucky ones. Then, by the side of the track, those whose horses had died, groups of gaunt figures round wretched little fires.

Another wayside station. Here were women and children selling horrible little scraps of meat, covered with their own filthy shawls, milk in bottles, and pumpkins. We got out of the carriage and I went up to a group of peasants. I asked one if the famine was bad in his district. "Terrible," he said, "last year we had stocks, but they were taken for the army because of the war. This year we have none, and the drought has left us with nothing for our beasts or for ourselves." I asked if the Government had succeeded in getting any seed to them. "Yes," he said, "they have given us seed, though not enough, and a good deal of plowing and sewing is being done. But I do not know how people will drag out through the winter. And what if, as they say, there is to be another drought next year..."

The Responsibility.

There is the whole story in little. Responsibility for the famine does not lie wholly on the drought, but in part at least on those Russians who persuaded foreign countries to aid them in forcing Russia to go on fighting year after year. Responsibility for the famine lies at least in part on the Russians who with French and English and German help occupied

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the Russian granaries in 1918, marched on Moscow and Petrograd in 1919, on those who in 1920 with the help of the Poles kept Russia yet another year of war, on the long blockade which by paralyzing the town indirectly paralyzed agriculture, and so brought the country to a state in which it was defenseless against the drought. Goodwill is there. Of that we had ample proof. The effort is being made to bring seed to the fields at a cost which will be paid in other parts of Russia. But that effort cannot but be inadequate, and Western help is late. Nansen might have brought the seed in time if Paris had allowed him. The world must realize that it is itself partially responsible for the horror of the Volga and the Kama and the Khirghiz steppes, and, quite apart from humanity, conscience should be enough to force the world to do the utmost to set right as far as possible the results of a futile mistaken policy which even yet has not been wholly discarded.

I am trying to write without bitterness, but I doubt if that is possible for anyone who has seen the things I have seen. Side by side with the passage I have just copied from my diary is another which will help to explain it.

The Wailing of the Children.

At Samara station the children throng beside the train, keeping up a steady wailing, as regular as the noise of night jars in the woods, each child speaking for itself, individually: "A little bit of bread .A little bit of bread. Uncle, little uncle, give a little bit of bread." The feet of the children were black with odd splashes of purple and blue, and bright lights where the sunshine caught the projecting bones like patches of leprosy. Their faces were like those of hurt animals, like white illuminated masks, like anything but the faces of children. People gave them scraps of food from the windows of the train. Each scrap went straight into their mouths, and there were those pitiable little hands already asking for more. Mothers were standing there, weakly crying, past begging. One told me she was walking from Orenburg to Minsk, that is to say from one side of European Russia to the other. They had started with carts and beasts. Eight of the family had died and all the beasts.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

She had a little scarcely moving skeleton in her arms, and two others at her side. A little boy with bleeding feet was searching the dust for the husks of sunflower seeds, finding here and there a husk that had been spat out before the whole of the kernel had been chewed out of it. Each tiny scrapheap put into his mouth.

With these things in my mind, you will forgive me if in spite of myself I write a little bitterly of those who seek to delay help, or seek to have it offered only in the form in which it must be and will be refused for fear lest it should be used to bring about new struggles and new upheavals – now, when but for the drought those people would seem to have passed the worst of their struggle. You will forgive me if I wish that M. Noulens ,with whose goodwill the Czechoslovaks took this town of Samara and so began the civil war of Koltchak which cost the district the marchings and counter – marchings of armies, could be brought here to this station of Samara, kept here three or four weeks among the starving children, himself without food, and then asked whether he would have food sent at once or whether he would prefer that the commission should be sent first to find by scientific means exactly how hungry he was.

MG. October 8, 1921

Russian Soviet Reply To British Allegations.

Lord Curzon Misled By The Forgeries Of German Spies?

Full Text Of Note By M. Litvinoff.

[Our special correspondent in Russia, Mr. Arthur Ransome, has forwarded the text of the Russian Soviet reply to the Note which Lord Curzon addressed last month to the Soviet making various allegations of breaches on the part of Russia in the Anglo – Russian Trade Agreement. As our correspondent was the first to explain in a recent telegram, the Soviet reply totally denies the charges made by Lord Curzon, and, moreover, asserts that the charges are based upon false information by German spies for the use of anti-Bolshevik propagandist. In evidence of this, the Note is accompanied by photographs of an anti– Bolshevik

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

sheet published in Berlin containing much of the matter which has now become the substance of the British allegations: for example, a speech attributed to Lenin, which the Soviet Note declares he did not make, and which is quoted by Lord Curzon as having been made by him on a date when he did not speak at all.]

The following is the text of the Soviet Note:

On September 15 Mr. Hodgson handed in to the Peoples Commissary for Foreign Affairs, a note of the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a lengthy document, in printed form, unaddressed and unsigned, dated September 7, which, as Mr. Hodgson explained was not intended for publication but which has in the meantime been widely published and discussed in the press

In accusing the Russian Government of having broken its pledges given in the Anglo – Russian agreement of March 16, the British Note??? to alleged activities of the Russian Government and its representatives and agents in??? countries directed against British interest. To substantiate the charges the Note brings into play the Communist Third International by quoting a number of alleged reports made to the Central Committee by members and officials of the Russian Government as, for instance, Mssers, Stalin, Eliava, Karakhan, and??? An alleged speech made by Mister Lenin on June 8 at the Congress of the Third International. Indeed these alleged quotations and speeches form the background to the rest of the charges and are to show that it is the deliberate policy of the Russian Government to undermine the influence of the British Government in the??? and to stir up revolutionary movements in??? and dependencies of Great Britain, and that the Russian representatives in their??? but carried out the policy of the Third International, which, as the Note asserts, ?? be identified with the Russian Government.

The Third International.

The Russian Government wishes to take this occasion to emphasize once more, as it has done many times before, that the mere facts of the Third International having for obvious reasons chosen Russia for the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

seat of its Executive Committee, as the only land which allows full freedom to the spreading of Communist ideas and freedom to Communists, and of some members of the Russian Government in their individual capacity belonging to the Executive Committee, give no more justification for identifying the Third International with the Russian Government than the Second International, having its seat in Brussels or counting among the members of its Executive Mr. Vandervelde, a Belgian Minister, and Mr. Henderson, a British Cabinet Minister, gave justification for rendering identical the Second International with the Belgium or British Government. Moreover the Executive Committee of the Third International consist of 31 members, amongst whom are only five Russians, including three who do not belong to the Russian Government.

The Russian Government is in a position, not only formally to reject the charges based on it being identified with the Third International, but also to deny all the charges in substance. So, for instance Mr. Stalin, who is the, according to the British Note, alleged to have made various reports to the "Central Committee" on behalf of "the Eastern section of the Third International" in June 1921, on the objects of that section, never had anything to do with the Third International or any of its sections, and had therefore no occasion to make reports ascribed to him and never made by them. Indeed, the Eastern section cease to exist in the autumn of 1920.

Equally false is the quotation attributed to Mr. Ehiava, who also never worked for or in connection with the Third International, and never made any reports to its "Central Committee." Nor did Mr. Karakhan ever make any reports "on the situation in the Near East" or in any other subjects. Still more baseless is the report of January 20 of Mr. Nuorteva, styled in the British Note as "the Director of the Department of Propaganda under the Third International." Mr. Nuorteva , too, has never worked in a??? Whatever for the Third International, and no "Department of Propaganda, existed at that time. More than this, Mr. Nuorteva could not make the above report or any similar report in June 1921, for the simple reason that he has been in prison since March.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

As regards Mr. Lenin's alleged speech of June 8, at the Congress of the Third International, the British Government, if it will care to cause a study to be made of the Moscow papers, in which the proceedings of the Congress were fully reported, will convince itself that Mr. Lenin made no speech on June 8, and that in his few speeches on other dates the sentences ascribed to him have not been pronounced by him at all, as they had no bearing on the subject of his speeches.

The Alleged Forgeries.

It is quite obvious that all the reports,???, and utterances quoted in the British??? have been invented, forged, and falsified for some purpose. They have appeared some time ago in various Russian counter – revolutionary papers, which also reproduced a ??? of other documents, circulars, and letters purporting to come from the Third International, various Soviet institutions, or from Messrs. Lenin, Trotsky, Chichern, Litvinoff, ?? or other Russians connected to the Soviet Government. In an attempt to trace these forgeries to their sources the Russian Government came across a bulletin??? in Germany under the title "Ostin???", published by an anonymous group of detectives, and supplied mostly to counter revolutionary papers and to secret agents of the government anxious to obtain secrets on Soviet Russia. Though stamped secret, "the bulletin does not conceal the address of the printing office (A. Win???-Wilhemstrasse II., Berlin, S. W. 48), and??? of its issues gives the name and address ??? Westerhogen and Co., Potsdammer 127, (appendix I.) To whom??? are to be sent.

Mr. Hodgson has been shown at the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs original copies of this and attached to this Note are photographic copies of some pages of the Bulletin.??? bulletin that circulates the majority??? sensational documents, such as??? circulars, personal letters, confessions etc. from Soviet leaders. It is probably this source that emanates the false information on Soviet Russia and Soviet leaders in official report of the Parliamentary Committee under Lord Emmott

It is, however, mostly to be regretted that??? trumped – up reports and speeches should?? their way into an official Note of the British Foreign

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Office to form this basis of a??? charges against the Government of a??? country. It is surely no mere coincidence that the majority of the apocryphal ?? speeches of Stalin, Eliava, Nuorteva, ??? and Lenin are to be found in the?? of the German detectives practically the same wording as they are cited in the British Note, as, for instance, the alleged reports of Eliava (appendix II.) of Nuorteva, Karakhan (appendix III.) of this speech of Lenin (appendix IV.).

The Soviet Government feels sure that the British Foreign Office has been misled by a group of professional forgers and swindlers, and had it known the real dubious sources of the information the Note of September 7 would never have been produced.

The Soviet and the East.

The Russian Government is not yet in a position to trace the sources of the equally false information of the British Government with regard to the rest of the charges mentioned in the Note of September 7 under the headings "India," "Persia," "Turkestan," "Angora," and "Afghanistan," when charges are also to a certain extent based of the above mentioned fictitious reports and speeches, but it wishes to state most emphatically that since the conclusion of the Anglo – Russian agreement it had no dealings, direct or indirect, with Mr. Chattopadya or any other Indian revolutionaries, that there exists no propaganda school in Tashkent for preparing emissaries for India, it has never had any contact whatever with Dr. Hafiz, and has no knowledge of his factory of smokeless powder. It is, however, a fact that an Indian who suggested to the Soviet government to organize some traffic in arms in Kabul has been arrested as an agent – provocateur and is still being kept in prison.

The Soviet Government must certainly decline any responsibility for the activities of Jemal Pasha in Kabul, to whom no assistance is being given. The crossing of Russia by natives of India or by other nationals on their way to Afghanistan constitute no more breach of the Anglo – Russian agreement than does the hospitality and freedom of movement given in England to a large number of Russian counter revolutionary plotters. The

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

Soviet Government wishes further to state that there is no foundation whatever in the assertion of the British Note that it had tried to prevent the Angora Government from coming to an agreement with Great Britain, and that it had assembled considerable forces on the border of Anatolia. This accusation is especially baseless now when the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs has quite recently been instrumental in bringing together the British Official Agent with the Turkish Ambassador in Moscow, and in offering them an opportunity for discussing the differences of their governments.

If the British Office had more exact information at its disposal and genuine Russian documents in its possession it would have been aware of the strict instructions issued after the conclusion of the Anglo – Russian Agreement by the Russian Government to its representatives in the East ordering them to abstain from any anti– British propaganda and to adapt their activities to the new relationship created between the Russian and British Governments by the signing of the Agreement. The Russian Government has no reason to believe that they are not acting in accordance with the instructions, and that they are not confining themselves to the protection of Russian interest without infringing upon British interest.

Mr. Rothstein.

True to the principles of self-determination for all peoples, the Soviet Government and its representatives exercise the greatest respect for the independence of the Eastern countries in giving up all the privileges and concessions forcibly extorted from them by the czarist Governments and rendering some small material and monetary assistance, thus amending the wrongs done to them by pre-revolutionary Russia. The Russian Government fails to see in what way the help given to Afghanistan openly, on the strength of the treaty which is been brought to the knowledge of the British Government by Mr. Krassin can be construed as an act unfriendly to Great Britain. The charges of the British Government in this respect are vague and unsubstantial or else they are based on quite imaginary facts, as, for instance, the setting up by Mr. Rothstein of a Revolutionary committee in Theran, or his attempts to bring about the dismissal of the Afghan representative, who, as a

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

matter of fact, is highly praised by him and enjoys his personal friendship.

It must be admitted that in some instances the representatives of the Russian Government may have unconsciously infringed upon British interests, not knowing exactly in what direction the interests lay. It should be remembered that during the negotiations for the Anglo – Russian Agreement it was the Russian Government which demanded time after time full discussion of the points at issue and an exact definition of the mutual obligations, and that it did so for the sole object, as it stated then in all its Notes, of rendering impossible any future misunderstanding arising out of the vagueness of their obligations, and that it was the British Government which insisted on concluding the Agreement by the way of an exchange of radios and on condensing the mutual obligations into vague formula.

Still, the Russian government has done its utmost in honoring all its undertakings, and has endeavored to obviate any causes for friction and misunderstandings, but it certainly could not prevent malefactors from forging documents and thus misleading the British Government. It could not expect that the British Foreign Office would lend itself to using such documents in an attempt to discredit the Russian Government and to throw doubt upon his loyalty to its pledges.

British Unfriendliness.

The Russian Government, on its part, feels compelled to place on record that the attitude of the British Government has lately been far from friendly towards Russia. The imprisonment by British authorities in Constantinople of a number of Russian trade agents and their expulsion without any charge having been preferred against them, the cooperation with the French Government in the so-called "Russian question," the continued support given to French schemes tending to frustrate any effort on the part of various countries and international bodies to bring some help to the famine stricken population of Russia, and lastly the presentation itself of the British Note of September 7, with his grave charges based merely on imaginary facts and unchecked loose

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

information obtained from dubious sources at a time when France was inciting Poland and Romania to make war upon Russia, do not belong to the category of facts which would induce the Russian Government to believe that it is the sincere desire of the British Government to foster friendly relations between the Governments and the peoples of the two countries.

The British Government is well aware of the readiness of the Russian Government to discuss in a friendly manner the best ways and means for removing any hindrances to the establishment of normal relations, and when, instead of resorting to baseless charges for casting doubts on the good faith of the Russian Government and for deterring other nations from entering into agreements with Russia, the British Government will on its part show the same readiness for adjusting differences in a businesslike way, it will find a ready response on the part of the Russian Government.

**Deputy Peoples Commissary for Foreign Affairs, Maxim Litwinoff.
Moscow, September 27, 1921.**

MG. October 10, 1921

Famine.

Winter-Seed For Russia.

No Other Means Of Averting Famine Next Year.

Only One Quarter Of The Need Supplied.

[From the Famine Region.]

In Samara we were lodged in the hotel of the Red Army, whither the day after our arrival came the first two representatives of the American Relief Administration. I did not see their room, but it probably was not better than ours. We had a room between us. The floor, which needed it, was specially washed for us, at our own urgent request. Someone else was deprived of an inferior electric lamp for our benefit on my pointing

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

out that I had to write up my notes at night. An old soldier from the Russo-Japanese War, preserving all the characteristics of the old-time Russian batman, professed himself willing to perform miracles for us, and did succeed in getting us a samovar. We made up some hot rum and preserved milk, took more aspirin, and went to bed. We had no bedding. Ercole removed his mattress, for obvious reasons, and slept on the springs. I spread my sleeping – bag, soaked it in turpentine, and so slept, or rather rolled and tossed in it all night.

The first thing that interested me, as I am persuaded it should be the first thing to interest anybody who hopes to see these people or that small percentage of them that survive the winter spared from a repetition next year of this year's horror, was the question of the sowing of the winter seed. Talking with Nansen in Riga, we had tossed the question backwards and forwards between us and concluded, in view of the fact that the season was already so far advanced, that it would be impossible to supply in time all the seed necessary. Nansen, however, had a scheme of buying seed in countries near Russia, guaranteeing to restore to those countries the same amount of seed from America and Canada. The second time I saw him it was already clear that too many difficulties would be put in the way of this to make it a serious proposition and that if anything were to be done it would be done unaided by the Russian Government. I admit that I did not think they would be able to do much. However, partially by buying seed abroad, partially by using stocks collected in the more fortunate districts, they have succeeded in collecting a good deal, and, in spite of the inadequate transport, have been able to get what they collected to the peasants, not as early as might have been wished, but still in time to prevent what seemed at one time possible a complete abandonment of the drought-stricken fields. The need was over forty million poods. Ten million poods were actually secured and distribution was already in full swing when we reached Samara.

Distributing the Seed.

About noon in the morning of September 14 we came with our cameras to the "Elevator," on the outskirts of the town where the seed was being

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

distributed. A big pale building, high above the precipitous bank of the river, it stood like a big rock, washed by a tossing sea of horses and camels. When we came nearer we could see that there were definite currents in this sea. A stream from it poured in under a gallery at one end of the building, passed through under a long platform where the seed was being measured into sacks, and then the loaded carts passed out on the other side, and with stately camels or little plodding horses swept around the other edge of the sea of waiting carts, and so off to their villages anything from 30 to 100 miles away Each volost or district is allowed a definite quantity of seed. Each volost sends its own carts to fetch the seed, and the work of distribution and measuring is done by the peasants themselves, each district putting up its representatives, so that there is a general guarantee all around that no volost gets more or less than it should.

This scene was extraordinarily cheerful, a violent contrast to the other misery of the refugees. Here were peasants who had not lost hope. They had the hope in their hands in seed for next year. They laughed and joked among themselves, and it was hard to realize how very little stood between them and the wretchedness that had already swallowed up so many. I picked a peasant woman at random, lodged under the nose of a camel that tried to sneeze in my face, and asked, "And when you get the seed home, won't you eat it?" "And starve next summer?" she replied scornfully. I asked the same question of others and got the same or similar replies. This seed was actually going into the ground, and before I returned from my journey I had seen enough land plowed, enough peasants sowing, to realize that whether or not help comes to Russia from without, Russia is doing her best to help yourself.

Again and again during the last few years we have been told (by townsmen and politicians) that by general agreement the peasants were ceasing to cultivate the ground. Our informants underestimated the immense momentum of agricultural life. Tools wear out, agriculture is less and less productive, but for these peasants of 1000 years, no political considerations could interrupt their normal habits, and it would be easier to stop the course of the seasons than to persuade a Russian peasant with both land and seed not to scratch the one with whatever

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

instrument he has and so put the other into it. He may talk and threaten; he may hide his corn when he has harvested it; but when the time comes for sowing if he has seed he will sow.

Peasants Won Over to the Soviet.

Ercole busied himself with his camera while I wandered away among the camels, talking first to one and then another among the peasants waiting for their seed. For the most part, of course, our talk was of the famine, but now and again I heard something of more general interest. I tried to find a Communist but could not. All describe themselves as "non-party." That label, however, does not mean anything of what it actually says. It means simply that a man is not a Communist. It is frequently used by men who have themselves though not Communist fought willingly against the White Armies of intervention. I have the impression that it is less frequently than formally used to cover active hostility to the present regime.

Last year and the year before I found and wrote that the bulk of the population were grumbling. Here at Samara, as at Sehezn on the way into Moscow, and at other places on our journey I have the new experience of finding peasantry, not townsmen, obviously reconciling themselves not to the Communist regime of 1920 but to the Communist regime with its new economic policy set out in 1921. I asked man after man and did not find one who did not say at once that he very much preferred the new system of the regular tax to the old system, which attempted the impossible and made free trade illegal.

That change of policy six months ago, a change largely brought about by the personal influence of Lenin himself, who threatened to resign if the Central Committee did not adopt his program, and, I believe, did indeed resign, leaving Russia for seven hours without a Government, while the obstinate members of the Committee were reconciling themselves to the spectacular change of course, has gone a very long way indeed towards making a peasant counter-revolution impossible. It was a concession to human nature, and particularly to the peasants, who felt that they had not fought the Whites in vain and that the revolution was

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

no longer to be directed exclusively, as it had seemed to them, for the benefit of the lazy townsmen. Without the right to sell his produce the peasant was arguing that his possession of the land was a mirage. He was torn two ways. He would defend the Government that had given him the land from the Whites, who he was sure would take it from him. At the same time he would fight that Government which took his produce and did not allow him to sell. He looks on the tax in kind as natural, in comprehensible, necessary, and his political frame of mind as altered completely.

Government Help Recognized.

Even the famine, which people abroad imagined would damage the Government, has so far done nothing of the sort. In Samara and Kazan I saw for myself. From Saratoff an Englishman who has himself suffered by the revolution brings the same report. The peasants did not expect the Government to help them. The success, partial as it is, of the Government in bringing seed to them, the obvious visible efforts of the Government to help them, have had the natural effect. I quote one of many conversations which I had among the crowd of snorting, sneezing camels, long-tailed little horses, and bearded peasants. A stout fellow who told me he had driven in for seed from a village 80 miles away, after explaining the advantages of camels, how they could live on next to nothing and do without water for days on end, told me his views on the situation in general. "They do not give us enough seed," he said. "But we know that they have got for us this seed they are now giving out, and that but for them we should have got nothing." "And how do they talk of the Government now?" I asked. "We are a simple people," he replied. "When things are bad we say it is bad. When things are good, then we peasants say nothing and are contented. But those of us like me, who fought against Denikin and against Wrangel down there in the south, know well enough that we should have got things going long ago if only those generals have not come bothering us. Why couldn't they leave us alone?"

He asked what the photographing was for, and I told him it was so that people abroad should see that they were trying to help themselves, and

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

so be more willing to send them help. He smiled in his beard. "I was at Perekop," he said, "and saw how you had helped Wrangel. Strong places he had made with your help. And we took those places and made him run away so fast that he threw away everything you gave him, tanks, airplanes, guns, everything. The whole place was littered. You would have done better to help us in the beginning. Then the war would not have lasted so long, and things would not be so bad. But are you sure you are really going to help us now?" I told him the first American train of food for children would be at Kazan in two or three days, then another would be coming to Samara, and that we were going to feed the children in Saratoff also. He went off at once, and began telling everybody he met.

Gorging and Starvation in One Street.

But the change of policy of the Government in the direction of free internal trade in allowing private enterprise, although it has pleased the peasants, has had another effect. It has produced here of the same contrasts to which we in more ordinary countries have long since become accustomed. Here, as in London or Paris or New York, people starve and eat cakes in the same street, a thing impossible in the Russia of a year ago, partly, of course, because of the absence of cakes. In the dull little town of Samara shops are opening. There are plenty of small restaurants. The Café Jean, mentioned in Baedeker, is again crowded with people, though less fashionably dressed than old time. The Café is frequented mostly by small traders, by market women, by people who, far from being manual laborers, would certainly a year ago have been rounded up as "speculants." Now they sit there and gorge themselves on excellent chocolate and elaborate pastries, while on the doorstep of the Café are starving folk glad of the veriest crusts. Industrial conscription has lapsed and been forgotten. Here in Samara, as in London, you can find a +crowd of waiting hungry men who all rush together when someone calls out "Does anyone want work?"

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

MG. October 11, 1921.

A "Pitiable Multitude."

The Famished Children Of Samara.

Abandoned By Their Parents In The Hope Of Rescue.

"In Samara Province 700,000 Children Are In Need."

[From the Famine capital region.]

[Column One]

[first column in dispatch is partially unreadable]

Straight from that. hopeful scene ??? at the elevator at Samara we went to the Café Jean, and then down to the shore of the Volga, down a broken street, past booths where you could buy white bread, and, not 100 yards away, found an old woman cooking dung in a broken saucepan. Within a short distance of the market was a mass of refugees, men women, and children, with such belongings as they had retained in their flight from starvation. Still starving, listlessly waiting??? the wagons to move them away to more distant districts. Some of them are sheltered from the rain that is coming now by the use of open sided sheds. Others are sitting hopelessly in the open not attempting to move, not even begging. I shall never forget the wizened dead face, pale green, of a??? weeping little girl, whose feet were??? bones over which was stretched dry skin that looked like black leather. And she was one of hundreds. A fortnight ago there were 20,000 waiting beside quays at Samara. Every day about 1400 were taken off in wagons. There are, of course no latrines. The beach was black with sewage until as an eyewitness (not a Communist told me) the local Communist engaged a "Saturdaying" which deserves a mention In history, and themselves removed the disgusting ordure, and, it is a day or two before the appalling stench that is begins to rise from the beach. We went 30 miles or so down the river in the steamer, but saw nothing that we were??? to see again on the long trip up the river from Samara to Kazan. I must mention??? an illuminating little talk with a captain who took peasant passengers getting them pay in pounds of flour for their tickets and while violently opposed to almost everything

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

in the Revolution (quote I could hit??? in the face when I think about it") he ask us anxiously, did we not think that the fighting was over and that in future they would be allowed to live in peace?

"The Children's Houses."

I did not at first, as perhaps I should have done, address myself to the official committee for fighting the famine, to whom I had a letter of introduction, or to the??? committee, for whom I have papers from the, Commissariat of Health, because, with??? the shortest time at my disposal, I was??? to see things rather than to collect??? which, after all I could just as well obtained in Moscow. I have learnt in Moscow what to look for, and went to look for it, only visiting the committee just before our departure. In the morning of the second day we called at one of the 60 "children's houses" in Samara,??? that Ercole the famine orphans, the children purposely abandoned in the streets, in the state in which they were received. It was a warmish day, and??? the street we could see a crowd of children in the garden. They were waiting their turn to be medically examined. The house was a good enough house, but there was nothing in it – no beds, none of the things we in England think necessary to make even tolerable. Yet to get children into this house parents were literally dropping children in the street and making off in hope that the children would thus get help that would be denied to them if they still had the elders presumably capable of looking after them. The garden, a plain yard with a few trees, was full of children, lying in the sun under the wall,??? In silent, unchildlike groups, ragged, naked, some with nothing whatever but dirt. All were scratching themselves.??? these children, a man and a woman walking about, talking quietly to them, carrying sick children into the house, carrying others out. We tried to get a picture of them before they knew that we were there, but we were not quick enough. We had hardly begun to turn the handles of the machine before some of the children??? And, some with fright, some with??? all scrambled to their feet, although many of them fell again, and, too weak to stand stayed sitting on the ground where???. Starving though they were, they were children enough to be interested in having their pictures taken, and the printable multitude thronged about the camera. We photographed them just as they were. We picked four little boys and

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

photographed these alone. Wishing to reward them we gave them some chocolate before a woman looking after them had time to remove them. "You must not do that," she said: they are too hungry." But it was already too late. All of them who had strength to??? were on the top of each other fighting for scraps of chocolate like little animals, small, weak animal cries.

That is only one of dozens of such scenes we witnessed during those two days in Samara. Samara is one place of hundreds more people are trying to save the ???. Nowhere have they the means that other countries have to give them what should be given. And, to the shame of??? there are some in Western Europe who have urged that help should not be given.

"A Man of God."

Beside the goods station is a huge camp??? tents, a military camp of the Red Army handed over bodily by the army authorities for the use of the refugees. The refugees overflowed from the tents and built??? tents and wigwams for themselves out of anything that came handy – rags, branches, pieces of old iron from the railway. Everywhere on the open ground??? Cemetery, whither every day fresh bodies are carried ("35 this morning a man told us, whose little hut was at the entrance to the cemetery), and??? the railway line for half a mile or so,??? little camp, fires and people cooking pumpkin rind, scraps of horse dung, here and there scraps of bread and bits of cabbage. In all that vast crowd there was not one who did not look actually hungry.??? mere hunger would be a relief

[Column Two.]

Among them from tent to tent walked an unshaved young man with a white forage cap, now nearly black, a blue shirt and breeches, and no coat. A mechanic who was carrying the camera tripod for us told me who he was. He was a German, one – time prisoner of war, now a Communist, and "for all that," as my man put it, "a man of God. He has stayed with these people since the beginning. He never leaves them. I don't believe

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

he ever sleeps. Whatever can be got for them he gets it. He has taken and lived through all their diseases. It is owing to that one man that there is such order in this place instead of pandemonium. Thousands owe their very lives to him. If only there were a few more like that." I wished to speak to that young German, but, just as I was making my way to him through the crowd, a little skeleton of a boy pulled at his sleeve and pointed to a tent behind him. The young man turned aside and disappeared into the tent. As I walked by the tents, even without going into them, the smell of dysentery and sickness turned my stomach like an emetic.

A Medical Station.

A little crowd was gathered beside a couple of wooden huts in the middle of the camp. I went up there and found that it was a medical station where a couple of doctors and two heroic women lived in the camp itself fighting cholera and typhus. The crowd I had noticed were waiting their turns for vaccination. At first the people had been afraid of it, but already there is no sort of difficulty in persuading them to take at least this precaution, though seemingly nothing will ever teach them to keep clean. The two women brought out a little table covered with a cloth, and the usual instruments, and the crowd already forming into line pressed forward. I called to Ercole and he set up his camera. One of the sisters called out "Lucky ones today; vaccination and having your pictures taken at the same time," and while the camera worked, those behind urged those in front to be quick in taking their rags off, and to get on so that they too would be in time to come into the picture.

There were old men and women, girls and little ragged children. Shirt after shirt would come off, showing ghastly bags of bones, spotted all over with bites and the loathsome scars of disease. The sister cleaned up a place with iodine, applied the syringe, then another dab of iodine, disinfected the syringe, and was ready for the next patient. Some among the patients were coming for the second dose. And, dreadful as their condition was, almost all showed an interest in the camera, while I could not help reflecting that before the pictures are produced some at least of them will have left the camp and made their last journey into the

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

cemetery over the way, the earth of which, as far as you could see, was raw with new – made graves.

A Refugee Train.

In the siding beyond the camp was a refugee train, a sort of rolling village, inhabited by people who were for the most part in slightly better condition than the peasants flying at random from the famine. These were part of the returning wave of that flood of miserable folk who fled eastwards before the retreating army in 1915 and 1916, and now uprooted again and flying westwards again with the whip of hunger behind them. To understand the full difficulty of Samara's problem it is necessary to remember the existence of these people who are now being sent back to the districts or the new States to which they belong. They have prior right to transport, and, in the present condition of Russian transport, the steady shifting of these people westwards still further lessens the means available for moving the immediate victims of the drought. I walked from one end of the train to the other. It was made up of cattle-trucks, but these trucks were almost like huts on wheels, for in each one was a definite group of refugees and a sort of family life. These folk had with them their belongings, beds, bedding, chests of drawers, rusty sewing machines, rag dolls. I mentioned just a few of the things I happened to see. In more than one of the wagons I found three and four generations of a single family – an old man and his still more ancient mother struggling back to the village which they had last seen in flames as it was set on fire by the retreating army, anxious simply, as they said, "to die at home," and with them a grandson, with his wife (married here) and their children. Families that have lost all else retained their samovar, the central symbol of the home, the hearth of these nomads; and I saw people lying on the platform with samovars boiling away besides them that must have come from west of Warsaw and traveled to Siberia and back. These were not like the poor wretches I saw on the Volga banks, but many had been waiting for weeks while over at the other side of Russia, in Poland, in Estonia, in Latvia, in White Russia, the necessary inquiries were being made lest they should make the journey, as many have, only to be held up in new distress at an inhospitable frontier. In the doorway of one truck I found a little boy,

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

thinner than any child in England shall ever be, I hope, and in his hand was a wooden cage, and in the the cage was a white mouse, fat, sleek, contented, better off than any other living thing in all the train. There were a man and his wife on the platform outside. I asked them where they were going. "To Minsk," said the man, "those of us who live; the children are dying every day." I looked back at the little boy warming his mouse in the sun. The mouse, at least, would be alive at the journey's end.

Late in the afternoon I went to the house of the Executive Committee to see the president, Sokolsky. Sokolsky, like almost every one of the officials, had fallen ill in his turn, and I phoned only the secretary of the Committee, who gave me the statistics on which they were working, warning me that complete registration, over so enormous an area, of people largely on the move was impossible, and that, terrible as the picture was which these figures presented, the reality was probably worse. I give the figures without further comment. In Samara province 700,000 children are in need. Of these 17,000 get daily 1 pound of bread, 1 ounce of sugar, 1 ounce of fats, and three times weekly rice soup. There are four famine relief trains, which stay two weeks in a place and then move on. They are without sufficient supplies. In the four worst ouyezds are 326,000 children. Set the pictures I have described beside those figures, translate one into terms of the other, and you will have some conception of the horror that is awaiting relief.

MG. October 13, 1921.

Up The Volga To Kazan.

Starving Crowds Of Refugees On The River – Bank.

The First Touch Of Winter.

[From the Famine Region.]

[FIRST COLUMN—

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

[First column is partially unreadable]

The question arose of how to get from Samara to Kazan. The Famine Committee at Samara phoned to the quay while I was going through his figures, I found that there was a boat going up river in an hour's time. He asked what kind of a boat but the telephone had been cut off. Telling him that we would go by whatever boat it might be since we wished to reach Kazan in time to meet the American relief force, I rushed off to the hotel, found Ercole with his cameras, washed and shook out my clothes, splashed turpentine all over them, and hurried down to the river with our baggage in time to get on the steamer Bogatyr, pushing our way through the crowd??? smell, and the curious persistent noise of the splitting of sunflower seeds and the spitting out of their husks.

Our good luck in falling on this boat was??? stage management on the part of the Communists, for until I asked them to telephone they had no idea that we were leaving.??? if they had wished to give us a feeling of renewed hope after the terrible sites we had seen in the morning they could not have done better. We found ourselves on a huge steamer, launched in 1919, with clean decks, very simply decorated, "a ??? steamer," as one of the officers described her, a red banner across the saloon??? Bogatry, the best gift of Red??? to the Republic of Soviets." Even in the cabin, we found bugs but outside we found the miracle of polished brass??? engines properly kept, a certain amount of fresh paint, and a crew with something of the esprit de corps we know on English boats. We had a nice cabin, and as I was unpacking a stewardess came in to wipe out the washing basin, where there was actually running water. I asked her how long she had been on the boat. She replied, I am a true daughter of the Volga, not "two days" but "two navigations," for just as a sundial counts those hours only when the sun shines, so the river is the river only??? and ice. She added, "I was??? on him before he was launched. I have been with him since his birth." "Did you have much fun at his birth?" I asked "Of course," she replied, "music and dancing: it was a great holiday." We could barely show ourselves on deck without being asked by one of the crew to photograph part of the ship, of course with himself in a prominent position.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

A Meal on Board.

We had had nothing to eat all day, and went into the buffet, where we had soup, sturgeon, and lemonade (very beastly lemonade), and were charged 15,000 rubles each. We offered the amount of the tip, and the waiter handed us back the tip. I nearly fell out of the chair. "I am myself the boss," he explained. "How is that?" I asked, and he told me. They have an artel, an institution known in Russia long before the revolution, in which all the members are jointly responsible for each one of their number. The artel ??? delegates so many of its members to run the buffet on each steamer. "What were you before the revolution?" I asked. "I was a waiter," he replied, and added, "my old boss is working with me in this artel." The particular fellow who waited on us certainly??? to be a "boss." He could not have done better if he had been the manager of a first rate hotel and we his first guests. But we were lucky on the Bogatry. We had a very??? experience on another boat.

I suppose the trip up the Volga has been made 1000 times. But we made it with special circumstances. To stand on the deck of that comparatively clean steamer, going up and down the immense river, after??? hither and thither among people??? together, crawling with vermin, none ??? far from his belongings even for those??? for which civilized human usually seek some sort of seclusion; to look on the majesty of the river, to watch the red and gold of autumn foliage on the bank on one side, the gleaming sand on the other, after looking at scarcely human??? of misery and starvation; to hear the birds, the occasional splash of a fish,??? purring of water under the prow instead of that incessant wailing of suffering children, was like stepping from hell to heaven. The contrast was so [second column] violent that it destroyed reality. Either those scenes of misery had never been, or this of quiet beauty was a cheating dream.

Yet the two were very near. On the steamer itself two small children had hidden themselves, hoping to go somewhere, to get something, anyhow to escape from the horror of the riverbank. They were found, and the woman doctor on board washed them and put them into clean rags of some kind, to hand them over to a relief station higher up the river. Both

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

were ill. We stopped at a floating hospital barge, but it was full up, and the children had to be taken farther. At each river station at which we called the bank was crowded with refugees from the famine – stricken hinterland. In this country all roads lead to the river. But the river in this year of horror merely leads north and south between famine – stricken banks, and those who travel on it to travel not from famine to plenty but from hunger to hunger. I remember particularly our stop at Tetiushy. Here a precipitous bank rises many hundred feet, like a brown wall, down which zigzag tracks fall dangerously to the shore.

Frost In the Wind.

It was growing dusk. Hadead horses were stumbling down the tracks bringing carts and more refugees to join the crowds already hopelessly camping. Little fires were burning all over the shores. Some of the campers have been there three weeks already. The nights were turning cold. They had fixed up little shelters against the wind, with old shawls, torn blankets, scraps of tinsplate from some disintegrated steamer. Others had crawled under overturned boats and lay on their stomachs, just their heads showing, looking hopelessly out with passive eyes, like the dull eyes of bullocks expecting the slaughter. I felt the frost in the wind and knew that they would not have long to wait.

They made no attempt to board the steamer. They saw it come. They saw it go. It was going from one famine-stricken place to another and could do nothing for them. They scarcely moved. Round the fires here and there a man or woman glanced around, but turned instantly to their little pots. And in the pots? Horse –dung bread, the poisonous rind of the big green red hearted pumpkins of Tsaritsin and Astrakhan, the gleanings of the road and the beach. They were peasants from up country. Often when we gave them chocolate they did not know what it was. The steamer gave its three whistles. A few turned for a moment. Those who lay watching went on watching, just masks under the gunwales of the overturned primitive boats (some of them hollowed from single tree trunks as by prehistoric man). But most of them had passed the stage of noticing anything, and crouched where they were, their backs to us, three loud hoots and the fuss of a departing steamer being incidents of a world to which they had already ceased to belong.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

And then ropes were cast-off, the wheels churned again and in a moment or two of that ant-heap of human misery nothing was left but the great wall of the cliff, and below it was thousand tiny fires, which presently faded into the dust, and we were alone once more with the quiet ceaseless murmur of the river, the changing cliffs cutting the evening sky, the low woods of the farther shore dim in the twilight, slipping upstream, higher and higher, watching the wind dust away the cobwebs of cloud, seeing the North Star peer out overhead, and at last the full glory of the moon pouring down over the enormous landscape.

Twenty-hours we spent in going up the river, meeting huge rafts of logs a quarter of a mile in length, with huts built at either end for the crew, with complicated series of rudders, with wooden water sails to lower into the current for steering purposes, with the ingenious drags for keeping them in the main channel, and on the way from the forest of the north to the timberless country of the Volga mouth. We passed fishermen in little boats, with tip tilted stem and stern, drawing their nets or fishing with hand lines. We passed larger boats of the same kind, sailing under little square sails, or pulling upstream with four oars out, and a steersman perched high in the stern working his big flat paddle. We passed boats loaded with hay till they look like floating haystacks, steered with enormous rudders, half as long as the boats themselves.

MG. October 14, 1921.

**A Voyage Up The Volga.
The Horrors Of A Refugee Boat.**

[From the Famine Region.]

It was late in the second evening of my voyage up the Volga when we passed the mouth of the Kama and came to Bogorodsk the junction station of the two rivers. Here for the first time we realized that in this tragic year even Mother Volga is playing false to her children. At night

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

the scene looked like one of extreme, even surprising, business. The river was bright with the lights of the steamers. The little town on the high bank was gaily lit. The huge camp of refugees on the shore showed in the dark not the hopeless human crowd but only the multitude of fires. Daylight made in the end of the illusion. We had hoped to wake in Kazan. We were still at Bogorodsk. The crowd of steamers was there indeed, but motionless. They were waiting like ourselves, because above Bogorodsk there was not enough water over the shallows to let them pass. Navigation to the upper part of the river, to Nizhni and Rybinsk and Jaroslav, where at least there has been a good potato crop, was at a standstill except for the steamers of the very shallowest draught.

The wind was from the south-west, so that there was hope that the depth over the shallows would increase, and the huge crowd of steamers lay waiting for news of the rising of the water. The steamers, of course, lay with red flags and revolutionary names – Karl Liebknecht, Proletarian, The Volga Commune, Decabrist, and the names of Russians famous in the old-time struggle against the autocracy. But ours was the only new steamer. Many of the others had changed their names twice, once after the March revolution and the second time to a name with a deeper tinge of red after the revolution of November. We heard that the depth was 7 feet and 3 inches over the shallows. We were drawing eight, but had cargo to unload at Bogorodsk, which bought us 6 inches or more higher in the water. The officers and crew were hopeful but only because of the strength of their desire. It was the second time they had come so far and had to cut the journey short and go back to Astrakhan without going up to Nizhni, where they had their homes. They would not let themselves believe that they were to go down the river again. One of them, a lad who had fought against Koltchak on land, and later on an armored boat had taken part in driving the Whites out of Tsaritsin, had a little horse on board which he was taking home to his mother outside Nizhni. We had given him some chocolate, which he had solemnly wrapped up and put away for the same purpose, "to pleasure the old woman." And now the steamer was held up by the Volga itself, and the little horse, which stood placidly in the stern, eating melon rinds and scratching itself against the pump, would have traveled up from Astrakhan in vain. He smothered his anxiety by rigging up some fishing-lines. I had hooks in my pocket. We

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

made weights out of the iron nuts and fished from the deck, caught nothing, but passed the time. Then someone thought of still further reducing our draught by shifting half the passengers with their luggage to another steamer, to be re-transferred to a shallow-draught boat expected from the Kama.

A Comic Interlude.

All was business for a moment, and we swung out into midstream and made fast alongside the other steamer. Obviously no one would be inclined to choose the tedium of waiting for another boat if there was a chance of going on in this. I wondered how the operation of shifting the passengers was to be accomplished without a row. Someone ingenuously shouted "Who is for Kazan?" and there was an instantaneous rush to take places on the other boat. No one asked questions. Each was busy getting his bundles on his back and racing to stake out convenient claims on the deck – space of the steamer beside us. The weight and variety of their bundles acted as a sieve to separate the passengers, and at first there was no disorder. For half an hour the gangway between the boats quivered under the weight as man after man hurried across, each with incredible bundles, shacks, teapots, samovar's, huge chests, baskets, every kind of luggage. The transfer was accomplished. We stood visibly higher in the water. We should then have moved unostentatiously away, and all would have been well. But, Russian fashion, we stayed where we were. The captain was at dinner. No one gave the order, and presently a Tartar, wiser than the rest, guessed that perhaps our steamer was to move off first. Arguments began. Still no order was given and the two ships lay tied side by side. One by one people began slipping back with their bundles. The sailors below closed the gangway, and that, of course, increased the suspicion of those who had shifted. Everybody was most polite. "Tovarish! (Comrade!)" "I assure you ..." "I beg your pardon, but..." Fragments like this floated up. There was absolutely no swearing.

At last one or two of the men began to get across. "Comrade, don't start making a fuss, for that won't help anybody." One enormous fellow stepped over the railing and pushed across with two bundles slung

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

across his shoulders with a rope. The two sailors at the gangway, both small men, argued with him as with a child. He pushed on. They restrained him. At last, seeing that there was nothing for it, they having "comraded" him till their throats were sore, they joined forces and hurled him back with a rush. One of his bundles came untied, and there was a moment's peace, everybody being frightfully interested to see what he had inside – a medley of grapes, melons, underclothes, a little bread, a teapot, cup, spoon, and a couple of plates all tumbled on the deck. One plate broke with a little thin noise, followed by a deep "Ah!" from many throats. That was real tragedy. Still it would have been much worse if it had been a cup or teapot. He gathered his things into his bundle, tied it up, readjusted the rope on his shoulder, and then, both sides having taken fresh breaths the argument continued. Meanwhile people who have not joined in the argument were slipping one by one, unnoticed, from one ship to the other, not by the gangway. When it was over I think our draught must have been pretty well what it was before the maneuver began. But in any case it was a vain hope, as if the ship had been perfectly empty she would still have been too deep to pass the shallows.

A little steamer with a Government flag puffed out from the shore. It was the measuring steamer to test the draught of the ships wishing to proceed to. In a minute or two the final verdict was pronounced, against which there could be no appeal. We were nearly a foot too deep. Some of the sailors tried to call a meeting, as in the old days of the revolution, urging that the captain should make the attempt to pass the shallows on his own responsibility. The captain, of course, refused, and presently, swallowing their disappointment, they were making preparations for a new voyage to Astrakhan. Our friend of the fishing lines had not been idle. Seeing how things were going, he had already arranged with the captain of a shallow-draught cargo steamer to take his little horse up the river. "I'm sorry not to see the old woman," he said, "but the little horse will get to her all right, and I'll eat your chocolate myself." He did so.

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

A Change for the Worse.

After a short negotiation a little tug shifted us and our baggage to a steamer from the Kama, the Proletarian, the only steamer shallow enough to proceed up the river. The brief idyll of the Bogatry came to a close. The Proletarian never for a moment let us forget the misery of the shore. She had come down the Kama, and was crowded with refugees and filthy beyond all belief. In the place allocated to us for sleep I killed three or four bugs instantly, was not quick enough to kill several other even more unpleasant bedfellows, and, finally deciding to give up any idea of lying down, piled my things together, spread my waterproof upon them, sat on it, and failed to solve a chess problem, while Ercole played with his cameras. We ask for hot water, and the filthy old woman, worse than the worst London charwoman, brought us a coffee pot of boiling liquid. I made tea, sipped it, spat it hurriedly out and washed my mouth with disinfectant. It had been dipped from among the ships off that shore, which was nothing else but a vast latrineless camp, and was a mixture of kerosene and worse things.

We had already started up the river, and going on deck found a wild, windy night with running clouds. We were just passing the shallows. In the bows a man was sounding continually with a pole, his report being repeated in a melancholy howl by a man on the upper deck. "Seven"... "Six and half"... "Six"... "Five and half"... "Five" ... "Five" ... The steamers had swung around ... "Six "... "Six" ... "Six and a half"... "Six" ... until at last there was silence after a series of "sevens." We were over. I heard the captain shout "Full!" down the speaking tube, and presently we were churning away upstream. The clouds swept away and the moon shone out. It was very cold. I tried to go below, stumbling about the deck, avoiding boxes and bundles, stepping over sleeping bodies. I came to a door and looked in. A lamp was hanging between decks, and a hot stream of human breath and stink dimmed my glasses. As they cleared I saw a mass of humanity, sleeping close together on its bundles-men, women, and children all together. Right under the lamp lay a man and a woman, and a naked child between them. The woman, with boldly black hands, was picking lice one after another off the swollen, shining body

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

of the child. She wearied and slept, her hand lying on the little twitching body.

MG. October 19, 1921.

The Children Of The Famine Areas. Three Stories From Russia.

[Mr. Arthur Ransome, who has just come out of the famine region, writes that he has taken these stories from the Russian newspapers "Pravda" and "Trud."]

[These were printed for the occasion of a fundraiser.]

I. A Mother.

On the steps of the local Education Department are three little ones, six, seven, and eight years old, ragged, dirty-footed, hatless, skin showing the holes in their rags. They have been sitting silent for a long time.

"What do you want, children?"

They are silent.

"Well, why don't you speak?"

They are silent.

"Where have you come from?"

"They are silent. Tears etch dirty marks on the little ones cheeks.

"Have you a father, a mother?"

At that the tears of the others overflow also.

"Well, why are you silent, eh?"

They lift their hands and stare and are silent – as much as to say that they do not understand.

Their parents at home in the village have strictly ordered them to say not a word, to pretend that they are not Russian. The Children's Homes are overcrowded already. Some sort of sifting has to be done. And they send the children back to those who have any sort of means, however

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

small, of feeding them. Therefore, so that people should not know where they live, the parents tell the children to be silent, as if they were not Russian and did not understand anything at all.

"Oh, well, Ivan, we shall have send them –"

"Where?" lisps the little one, lifting wet eyes.

"Now, see, you could have spoken long ago," says the comrade. "Come along. We'll give you something to eat and something to drink and you shall live in the Children's Home."

And the children, like geese, one after another, jumping, tell all in a hurry where they came from, about the village, about their father and mother.

And there in the background, behind corners, doors, projections, 50 paces away, hides a woman, disheveled, bony, with blackened face and blistered feet, ceaselessly watching, never taking her inflamed, greedy eyes from the children as they walk along.

An emaciated mangy she – wolf?

No. A mother.

II. Orphans.

Again on the doorstep, two, barefooted, half – naked, hatless – there are always some, on the pavement, on the cobbles, on the stairs.

One 11 years old, the other a two year old crumb of a thing, scarcely able to hold up its pale, yellow – patched, swollen hand on its thin little neck.

These have nothing to hide, and the older one chose us all about it.

They lived in the village. The father died, seemingly, of typhus, and then the mother. Neighbors took them in, but then the famine came and they drove them out. For two days they have not eaten. The older one carried the younger 40 versts (about 26 miles) on her back. The little one sat straddle, clutching a dirty neck with dirty little hands, and all the time in a little thin wail "I want to drink ... I – want – to – drink."

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,

III. The Girl From The Volga.

Formerly the peasants came into the towns to sell food and to buy the manufacturers of the towns. Now the real monstrous horror of the famine is in the simple statement that the starving peasants are coming to the towns to look for bread.

I met her on the Kalanohevsky Square. She stood in her worn- out, patched clothes by the wall of the Kazan railway station, and compelled the attention of the passers – by by the painful look of her sunken, mournful eyes.

"My dear, perhaps I can be of use to you. You are in trouble – yes?"

I took her by the hand.

Big tears, quickly, one after the other, ran from her eyes and dropping, burnt my hand. She wept silently.

"I'm looking for work," she said at last. "I have come from the Volga, from nearby Samara."

"I know, I know. The famine in your country is terrible."

"Yes, we eat grass, acorns." She smiled bitterly. "But that is not why I ran away. My sister quite a little girl, only just pass 13, she could not stand it, and alone began to go into the town, to the docks. All alone, she fed the whole family. Neither mother nor I knew... She said she went to work... money and bread she sent us, and we... we ate..."

Well, calm yourself, don't cry. Come to my place and rest, and we'll find work for you, and all will be well. Now, don't cry." "Yes. But she – she hanged herself. We ate bread, her bread, and she had earned it with herself, paid for it in blood."

And the girl from the Volga wept quietly, and I comforted her. But could I bring her sister back with words?

DISPATCHES FROM RUSSIA 1917-1924,